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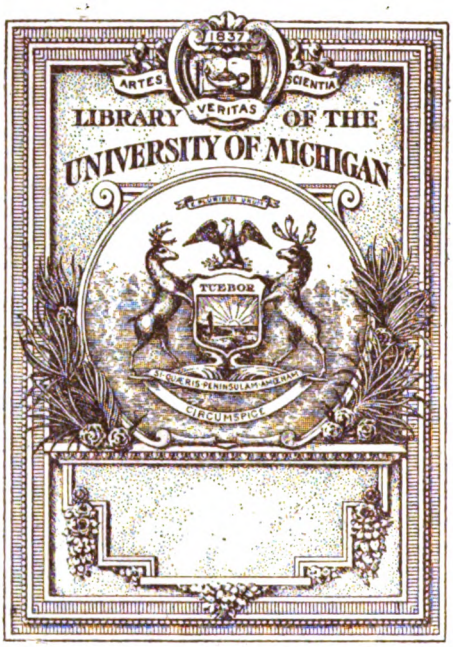
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An Illustrated Monthly

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"CHASSAIGNE HELD IT VERY CLOSE TO HER FACE, REVOLVING THE MIRROR IN A LONG-CONTINUED SERIES OF RAPID FLASHES BEFORE HER EYES. 'SLEEP!' HE COMMANDED."

(*See page 7.*)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Vol. 58. JULY, 1919. No. 343.

HELD *in* BONDAGE

by

F. Britten Austin

Illustrated by C. Clark, R.I.

TWO French officers, wearing the red velvet band of the medical service upon their caps, followed an old woman down the staircase of a pleasant villa-residence on the outskirts of Mainz.

"The bedrooms will suit perfectly," said the elder of the two officers, a major, in German. "And now a sitting-room?"

The old woman led them along a passage and, without a word, threw open the door of a room lined with books. The two officers entered, looked around in appraisement of the accommodation.

They were startled by a man's voice behind them.

"Good day, messieurs!"

They turned to see a tall civilian, pince-nez gleaming over exceptionally vivid blue eyes, fair moustache, fair hair cut short and brushed up straight from a square forehead, smiling at them from the doorway.

"I am Dr. Breidenbach—at your service," he said, courteously, in accentless French.

The major stepped forward.

"I am Major Chassaigne, monsieur. I—and my assistant, Lieutenant Vincent, here—have been allotted quarters in your house. Here is the *billet de logement*." He held out a piece of paper. "It is issued with the authority of the Army of Occupation and countersigned by your municipality. I regret to put you to inconvenience——"

"Not at all! not at all!" interposed the German, affably, taking the billeting order. As his face went serious in a scrutiny of the document the two officers had an impression of extreme intelligence and ruthless will-power. He looked up again with a nod of assent, his smile masking everything behind its gleam of blue eyes and white teeth. "Perfectly correct, monsieur! Please consider my house at your disposition. I am charmed to be of assistance to any *confrères* of my profession." He smiled recognition of their red cap-bands. "Although you wear another uniform than that which I myself have but recently quitted, we serve in a common cause—the cause of humanity, *n'est-ce pas?* which knows no national animosities."

"We desired a sitting-room," said Major Chassaigne, ignoring this somewhat unctuous profession of altruism.

The German waved his hand about the room.

"If this will suit you——?"

"Your library, monsieur?" queried the lieutenant.

"My work-room," replied the doctor. "Before this deplorable war interrupted my studies I had some little reputation in my special branch of mental therapeutics. If you are interested in psychology, normal and abnormal, you will find here a very complete collection of works upon the subject. Use them freely, by all means—— Well, if you are satisfied, gentlemen, I will leave you, for I am a busy man. I was just about to visit some patients when you arrived. *Auf wiedersehen!*" He smiled and left them.

Vincent turned to his senior with a puzzled expression.

"What is it about that man I do not like?"

The older man shrugged his shoulders.

"Too friendly by far. They are all the same, these Boches—they would do anything to make us forget," he said, divesting himself of his belt. "I am going to have a rest and a cigarette before we walk back into the town."

The young man wandered around the room, scanning the titles of the books on the shelves, picking up the various bibelots scattered about. Suddenly he uttered a startled cry.

"*Mon Dieu!* Look at this!"

The major turned to him. In his hand he held a small snapshot photograph. He stared at it, trembling violently.

"What is the matter?"

"Look—*it is she!*" The young man's face was a study in horrified astonishment.

Chassaigne looked over his comrade's shoulder at the photograph. It represented their host arm in arm with a good-looking young woman.

"*She?*" he queried, with a tolerant smile. "Be a little more explicit, my dear Vincent."

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The young man turned on him.

"You remember the deportations from Lille? The women and girls the Boche snatched from their homes? My *fiancée* was among them." His voice checked at the painful memory. "Other women have been traced, returned to their relatives. She has never been heard of again."

"My poor friend!" murmured the major, sympathetically.

Vincent stared once more, as if fascinated, at the photograph in his hand.

"It is she—in every detail! Yet——" His tone was puzzled. "No! I cannot believe it! It is some chance resemblance. This woman is obviously happy—content, at least." He looked up, passed over the photograph. "Chassaigne, you are an analyst of the human mind. What relationship do you diagnose between those two people?"

The major took the print, scrutinized it critically.

"Friends, certainly—lovers, possibly," was his sententious verdict.

"Then it cannot be!" cried the young man. "My *fiancée* was—is, I am sure of it—incapable of a faithless acquiescence in the wrong done to her."

"Can one ever be sure about a woman?" said the major, with a gentle cynicism. "However, I agree with you that it is improbable that the person in the photograph is your lost friend. It is, as you say, a chance resemblance."

"If I could only be certain of it!" The young man was obviously stirred to the depths. "I *must* make sure, Chassaigne—I must get to know this woman—find out who she is——!"

Both men turned at the sound of the door opening behind them. A young woman, tall, dark, strikingly handsome, stood timidly upon the threshold. It was the woman of the photograph.

"Dr.—Dr. Breidenbach?" she faltered, as though disconcerted by an unexpected meeting with strangers.

Vincent stared at her, held in a suspense of the faculties where he seemed not to breathe. At last he found his voice.

"*Hélène!*" he cried. "*Hélène!* It *is* you!" He sprang to her, clutched her arm. "What are you doing here?"

With a frightened gesture of repulsion the young woman disengaged herself from his grasp. She drew herself up, looked at him without the faintest recognition in her eyes.

"*Ich spreche nicht französisch, mein Herr!*" she said in a tone of cold rebuff.

"Hélène!"

She shrank back in obviously offended dignity and, without another word, haughtily left the room.

Vincent reeled away from the closed door, his hands to his head.

"My God!" he groaned. "Am I going mad?"

Then, ceding to a sudden impulse, he eluded his friend's restraining grasp, dashed to the door.

"Hélène!"

He found himself confronted by the smiling figure of Dr. Breidenbach.

"Pardon the unintended intrusion, messieurs!" he said, good-humouredly apologetic and taking no notice of Vincent's excited appearance. "My ward, Fräulein Rosenhagen, was unaware that I had guests. I merely wished to reassure myself that you require nothing before I go into the town. Is there anything you desire of me?"

"Nothing, thank you," interposed Chassaigne, quickly, before Vincent could speak.

"*A tantôt*, then!" He nodded amicably and went out.

"We ought to have questioned him!" cried Vincent, resentful of the missed opportunity.

"We ought to do nothing of the kind, my dear Vincent," replied Chassaigne. "Calm yourself. Be sensible. What question could we possibly ask that would not be ridiculous? You may be utterly wrong."

"*It is she!* I swear it!" asserted the young man, vehemently. "Do you think I cannot recognize a woman I have known all my life?"

He commenced to pace up and down the room in wild agitation. His friend contemplated him with a gaze of genuine solicitude.

"You may be mistaken for all that," he said, gently. "Doubles, although rare, exist——"

Vincent glared at him in exasperation.

"My *fiancée* had three little moles just above her right wrist—I looked for those three moles when I held that woman's arm just now—*and I found them!* Are doubles so exactly reproduced as that?" he asked, furiously.

"It sounds incredible, certainly," agreed Chassaigne. "But her attitude——"

"I know," said Vincent, recommencing his pacing up and down the room. "She looked at me like a complete stranger. But," he ground his teeth in jealous rage, "if she has consented to live with that man—she might have pretended—to hide her shame——"

"My friend," said Chassaigne, seriously, "in that young woman was neither shame nor pretence. I observed her closely. She genuinely did not recognize any acquaintance in you. She genuinely did not even know French. She was genuinely resentful of your familiarity. That was no play-acting performance. She was taken by surprise. She had no time to prepare herself for it."

The young man beat his brow.

"Oh, I am going mad!" he cried. "It was she, I swear it!—and yet—she did not know me! It baffles me." He stopped for a moment, then looked up with a new idea. "Chassaigne, you are an authority on these things. Is it possible—by hypnotism or anything of the sort—to change a personality completely? So that they forget everything—start afresh?"

Chassaigne met his glance, hesitated.

"It is—perhaps—possible," he said, slowly. He went up to his friend, put his hand on his shoulder, drew him to a chair. "Sit down, my dear fellow. Let us be calm and think this out. If you are right—if this young woman is indeed your—your friend—your suggestion might *perhaps* be the key to the enigma. But we shall achieve nothing by getting excited."

Vincent allowed himself to be gently forced into the chair. He looked white and ill, thoroughly shaken. His friend, contemplating him, was impressed by his appearance. Could such a shock be produced by a merely imagined resemblance? He felt that it could not—and then those three moles! His mind reverted to the young woman, to her indubitably genuine non-recognition, and he felt more than ever puzzled. With a quiet deliberation he drew up a chair and seated himself close to his comrade.

"Now let us analyse this problem," he said. He spoke in a calm, consulting-room voice which eliminated in advance all emotion from the discussion.

Vincent looked up, his eyes miserable.

"Have you ever known of such a case?"

"Of a personality *permanently* changed? No."

"Is it hypothetically possible?"

"Hypothetically—yes."

"By hypnotism?"

"By hypnotism and suggestion."

"But a woman cannot be hypnotized against her will, can she?"

"No—technically not—but her will may be stunned, so to speak, into abeyance by a sudden shock or by terror, and then, virtually, she might be hypnotized against her will. It is possible."

"'MON DIEU! LOOK AT THIS!' 'WHAT IS THE MATTER?' 'LOOK! IT IS SHE!'"

The young man took a deep breath.

"That acquits her moral responsibility. But you say it is hypothetically possible to change a personality *permanently?* It sounds fantastic to me. Would you please explain?"

Chassaigne leaned back in his chair and lightly joined the finger-tips of his two hands. He spoke in the impersonal tone of a professor elucidating a thesis.

"Well, my dear fellow, to begin at the beginning we should have to analyse personality—and human personality is a mystery I confess myself unable to explore. You are aware, however, that there are people who have double personalities—even triple and multiple personalities—which differ utterly. For some reason which eludes us one of these submerged personalities in an individual may suddenly come to the top. He, or she, entirely forgets the personality which was theirs up to that moment, forgets name, relations, every circumstance of life—and is completely someone else, quite new. There is a recent case, exhaustively studied, of a young woman with four such personalities—over which she has not the slightest control, and which differ profoundly, mentally and morally. I mention this merely to show you how unstable personality may be."

"These are pathological cases," interposed Vincent. "My *fiancée* was a thoroughly well-balanced woman."

Chassaigne nodded.

"Before the war, when you last saw her. She must have gone through great stress since. But let us continue. Under hypnotism a person is extraordinarily susceptible to the suggestions of the operator. He will carry out perfectly any *rôle* indicated to him. The reason is that in the hypnotic condition the conscious personality is put to sleep and the subjective mind—the dream-creating consciousness which is independent of the will—is paramount. That subjective mind possesses little if any power of origination, but it has a startling faculty of dramatizing any suggestion made to it. Tell a hypnotic that he is President Wilson at the Peace Conference, and he will get up and make a speech perfectly in character, amazingly apposite, expressing ideas that are normally perhaps quite alien to his temperament. Tell him that he is Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo, and he will act the part with a reality that is impressive. He believes himself actually to be Napoleon. Under hypnotism, then, the personality which is mirrored in the Ego—which you believe to be the essential, unchanging you—may be utterly changed——"

"Yes," objected Vincent. "But that is only during the hypnotic trance. It is not permanent."

"Wait a moment," said Chassaigne. "Suggestions made during the hypnotic trance may and do persist after the subject has awakened

from it. I may, for example, suggest to the hypnotized person that when he wakes he will have forgotten his native language—and he will forget it. If he knows no other, he will remain dumb until I remove the suggestion. I may suggest to him that a person actually in the room is not there—and he will not perceive him. I may suggest that in a week, a month, a year, at such and such an hour, he will perform some absurd action—and punctually to the moment, without understanding the source of his impulse, he will perform it. Post-hypnotic persistence of suggestion is a scientific fact."

"Then—in this case?"

"In this case we have to do with a clever and possibly unscrupulous man who is a specialist in manipulating the human mind. Of course, he practises hypnotic suggestion as a part of his profession—it is the chief agent in modern mental therapeutics. *It is possible* that by some means he got this young woman into his power after she was dragged from her home. It is possible that he was violently attracted to her and, finding that she did not reciprocate his sentiments, proceeded to subject her individuality to his. How would he do this? He would drug or stun her volition by terror—as, for example, a bird is helplessly fascinated in fear of the snake. Then, using some common mechanical means, such as the revolving mirror—staring into her eyes—anything that would fatigue the sensory centres of sight—he would induce a hypnotic trance. In that trance he would suggest to her that her name was no longer Hélène whatever it was—but Fräulein Rosenhagen, that she was a German woman ignorant of French, that she was perfectly happy and contented in his society. In the supernormally receptive state of the hypnotized mind he could give her lessons in German, which would be learned with a speed and accuracy far surpassing that of ordinary education. He would suggest to her that all his lessons persisted after waking. Finally, he would constantly reiterate these suggestions in a succession of hypnotic trances—once the first has been induced it is easy to bring about the second—until he had reconstructed her personality, or rather imposed a new one upon her consciousness.

"There, my dear Vincent, presuming that you are correct in your recognition of this young lady, is a theoretical explanation of the phenomenon which confronts us. For that the young woman genuinely did not recognize you, I am certain."

"She is held in the most diabolical slavery ever conceived, then!" cried Vincent, in despair. "A slavery of the soul! But can nothing be done?"

Chassaigne shrugged his shoulders.

"Something can be attempted, my dear fellow. I promise nothing." He rose from his chair. "Now I want you to promise to keep quiet—not to interfere. Fortunately, I speak German, and can talk to her in the language she believes to be her own. Wait a minute." He roved around the room, opening the cupboards under the bookcases, the drawers in the writing table by the window. "Ah, here we are!" he ejaculated. He held up a small silver mirror which revolved quickly upon its single support under the motion of his fingers. "I expected that our friend the doctor would possess this little instrument." He smiled. "Very considerate of him to go out and leave us to ourselves! Now we will try and profit by the circumstance. I am going to find that young lady and bring her to you. You will maintain the attitude of a complete stranger who regrets an impulsive familiarity for which a mistake in identity is responsible. Master yourself!" He put the little mirror on the table and went out of the room.

A few moments later he returned, held the door wide open for the young woman to enter. He spoke in fluent German.

"My young friend, Fräulein, will not be consoled until he has had the opportunity of a personal apology!"

The young woman inclined her head gravely, and somewhat shyly advanced to the centre of the room. Vincent rose to his feet, his face deadly white, trembling in every limb, and bowed. Ignorant of German, he could not utter a word. Chassaigne turned to him, spoke to him in French.

"Look closely at Fräulein Rosenhagen, *mon ami*—and satisfy yourself."

The muscles of his face tense under the effort to repress his emotion, to appear normal, the young man looked at her for a long moment. She returned his gaze without a quiver of the eyelids, smiled with the kindliness which sets a stranger at his ease.

"It is she—it is she," he muttered, hoarsely. "I swear it!"

Chassaigne turned to the young woman.

"My young friend is much affected by your extraordinary resemblance to a lady he knew, Fräulein," he said, smilingly, in German. "But he perceives now that he was mistaken. You will, I am sure, pardon an emotion that a person of your charm will readily understand. My friend was greatly attached to the lady he thought he recognized in you."

The young woman smiled upon Vincent in feminine sympathy for a lover.

"Is she a German?" she asked in a rich deep voice that made him start.

Chassaigne replied for him.

"No, Fräulein—she is a Frenchwoman brought to Germany against her will."

He observed her narrowly as he spoke. Her face remained calm. His words, evidently, awakened no latent memory in her.

"How dreadful!" she said. Her rich voice vibrated on a note of unfeigned sympathy which was, nevertheless, impersonal. "Poor man! And he does not know where she is?"

"He has no idea, Fräulein," replied Chassaigne. "But let us leave this painful subject. Will you not keep us company for a few minutes? We are strangers in a strange land." With a gallant courtesy, which, however, omitted to wait for her assent, he took her right hand and led her to a chair. His quick eyes noted

the three moles upon her wrist. She seated herself almost automatically. He registered, in support of his theory, her easy susceptibility to a quietly insistent suggestion. "Will you not tell us what is most worth seeing in Mainz?" he asked, smilingly.

She looked up at him.

"Alas, *mein Herr*, I cannot," she said. "I have never been in the city."

"Indeed?" He expressed mild but courteous surprise. "Perhaps you have only recently come to live here yourself?"

"Yes—er—no!" She smiled at her own confusion. "I mean we have been here some time—but we travelled so much before we came here—that I—I have really lost count——"

Chassaigne made a reassuring little gesture which relegated the matter to a limbo of indifference.

"You travelled with Dr. Breidenbach, I presume?" he asked, casually.

"Yes. We went to a great many places. He was in the army then."

"When you first met him?"

"Yes." Her first tone of confident assertion changed almost as she uttered it to one of puzzled doubt. "Yes—I—I think so—I really forget." She smiled in self-apology. "I have a very bad memory, you see, *mein Herr*," she said, as if in explanation. "Dr. Breidenbach is treating me for it."

"Ah? Doubtless he is doing you a great deal of good?" Chassaigne seated himself upon the edge of the table and smiled down upon her in paternal benevolence.

"Oh, yes," she began, impulsively. "You see, we are going to be married. But Dr. Breidenbach thinks it would not be right to be married until my memory is perfectly restored. So"—she hesitated, then smiled up with an innocent *naivet*', "so you see I am doing all I can to concentrate and—and get it right."

"*Mon Dieu!*" groaned Vincent in a low tone of anguish, turning away and staring out of the window.

Chassaigne frowned admonition at him in a quick glance unperceived by the young woman. Unobtrusively he put one hand behind him, picked up the revolving mirror from the table, held it behind his back. He nodded assent to her little self-revelation.

"Of course. No doubt you are making very rapid progress. Dr. Breidenbach is a very clever man, is he not?"

"Oh yes—very clever. And so kind!"

Chassaigne nodded again, his smile holding her confidence. As if absent-mindedly, he brought the little mirror in front of him, played with it. He noticed that her eyes fixed themselves instinctively upon it.

"Pretty toy!" he remarked, casually. "It belongs to Dr. Breidenbach, I suppose?"

She stared at it in a strange fascination, shuddered suddenly.

"Yes," she said, with a little gesture before her eyes, as though trying to throw off a spell; "yes—I—I think so——"

"A scientific instrument, I presume?" continued Chassaigne, imperturbably, as if merely interested in a curiosity, twirling the support between his fingers so that the mirror rapidly revolved. Imperceptibly he leaned forward, brought it nearer to her eyes. "It suggests sleep, I think," he continued in a quiet level voice that had suddenly acquired a peculiar intensity. "Sleep! Sleep, Fräulein!"

She stared at it, open-eyed, stiffening curiously. A phrase of protest seemed frozen on her lips.

He held it very close to her face, revolving the mirror in a long-continued series of rapid flashes before her eyes.

"Sleep!" he commanded in his intense level voice.

Her breast heaved in a long sleepy sigh. She shuddered again, stiffened suddenly, sat rigid, entranced. Vincent, watching, crept forward tense with anxiety.

"What are you going to do?" he whispered.

Chassaigne motioned him to silence with a gesture of his forefinger. He turned to the young woman.

"You are asleep, are you not?"

She did not reply.

"You hear me?"

"Yes."

Her lips moved, but beyond that she did not stir.

"In that sleep you remember things which you had otherwise forgotten." He turned to Vincent, whispered: "What is her name?"

"Hélène Courvoisier."

Chassaigne bent over her, picked up the wrist with the three moles.

"Do you remember Hélène Courvoisier?"

"No."

"Not even the name?"

"Not even the name."

There was a short silence, and then Chassaigne spoke again in insistent level tones.

"I suggest to you that you are yourself Hélène Courvoisier!"

Vincent, guessing the purport of the words, held his breath in suspense. To his despair the young woman responded with a far-away but genuinely mirthful laugh.

"No! How absurd!" she said, laughing like a person under a drug. "I am Ottilie Rosenhagen! I was always Ottilie Rosenhagen!" She laughed again, hysterically, but more and more freely, more and more loudly, more and more the laugh of a person normally awake. Still laughing, she shuddered, passed her hand across her brow, relaxed suddenly from her stiff attitude—and ceased to laugh with a glance around of bewilderment. She fixed her eyes upon Chassaigne.

"I—I think I feel unwell," she said, rising brusquely from her chair. "Excuse me!—I—I cannot stay!"

Without a glance behind her she went swiftly from the room.

Vincent watched her go, anguish and despair in his eyes. He turned to Chassaigne.

"Well?" he asked, hoarsely.

Chassaigne made a gesture of annoyance. He shrugged his shoulders.

"I might have guessed as much!" he said. "He has rendered her immune to the suggestion. You see, the trance was induced easily enough. As I thought, she was accustomed to being hypnotized by that mirror, and the mere sight of it was almost sufficient. Without that I should certainly have failed to hypnotize her at all, for Breidenbach would assuredly have impressed upon her the suggestion that she could be hypnotized by no one but himself. He has furthermore guarded himself by impressing upon her that the suggestion of being anybody but Ottilie Rosenhagen will suffice to break the trance. He cannot be sure that such an impressionable subject may not be hypnotized, possibly by a chance accident—such things occur—in his absence. But he can be sure that any counter-suggestion on the vital matter will defeat itself—as we have just seen."

"But can no one remove the suggestion?" cried Vincent. He glared around the room, clenching his fist. "The infernal scoundrel! By Heaven, I'll kill him!" He fingered the revolver in the holster strapped to his belt.

Chassaigne laid a restraining hand upon him.

"If you do—you will in all probability kill the only man in the world who can replace the factitious personality of Ottilie Rosenhagen by the real personality of Hélène Courvoisier!"

Vincent stared at him.

"Do you mean that?"

"He certainly can remove the suggestions he has himself made. It is doubtful whether any other can."

"He must be forced to do it! We must inform the authorities!"

"Agreed, my dear fellow!" Chassaigne's voice was soothing. "But we must first get evidence—real evidence—that this young woman is not Ottilie Rosenhagen but Hélène Courvoisier. What evidence have we got now that we could put up before a tribunal? None. Merely your alleged recognition, as against her own emphatic denial that she is the person you maintain. And at the present time not even the most cunning cross-examination could elucidate the fact that she had ever known the French language. Ottilie Rosenhagen does not know French—and at this moment, to all intents and purposes, she *is* Ottilie Rosenhagen!"

"Then we must get hold of him ourselves!"

"He will simply laugh at us as madmen—apply to have us removed from his house. No, my dear fellow, we cannot force the pace. Wait. Be patient. Arouse no suspicion in his mind. Our opportunity will come, be sure of that. The real personality of Hélène Courvoisier is there all the time, latent. I am confident that we shall—somehow—succeed in bringing it to the surface again."

The young man shuddered.

"I wish I could see how!" he said, hopelessly.

"You will see it. I guarantee it," said Chassaigne, forcing his cheerfulness. "Now, come away out of this house. We will go into Mainz, dine, spend the evening at a *café*, and forget it—or talk it over, as you will. We can do nothing more now." He smiled at him. "Come! As your superior officer I command you!"

The hour was late when the two officers returned. Before going out Chassaigne had provided himself with a key, and they let themselves into the house. It was quiet, its occupants apparently in bed. Throughout the evening there had been but one topic of conversation, and as it was yet unexhausted they went into Dr. Breidenbach's library, switched on the lights, and sat down for a final smoke before retiring.

"What we require," said Chassaigne, for the twentieth time, as he lit his cigarette, "is demonstrable evidence, something that makes it certain that you are not under an illusion. Even in my own mind, I cannot help confessing, there is a doubt. Look at it from my point of view. You assure me that you recognize the young woman. Good—but your recognition may be an error, although sincere. You strengthen your case by pointing to the three moles. But if I were questioned I should be bound to admit that you did not mention those moles until you had seen them on this woman. You may be suffering from a not uncommon delusion of memory which refers to the past a thing now for the first time perceived. The strongest piece of evidence we possess is that, under the psychical analysis to which we subjected the young woman, I found that she was a hypnotic subject, that she was impressible, and that her personality as Ottilie Rosenhagen is practically without any memories of the past. *But we could not discover any trace of any other personality.* She rejects as ridiculous the suggestion that she is not Ottilie Rosenhagen. That proves nothing, in the special circumstances we are considering. She might or might not still be Hélène Courvoisier. But the theory on which we have been working presupposes a crime so unique that, quite frankly, to be entirely convinced I want to come upon some trace of a submerged personality which tallies with your assertion. If she is Hélène Courvoisier that personality is certainly there. But how are we going to get at it?"

Vincent shook his head.

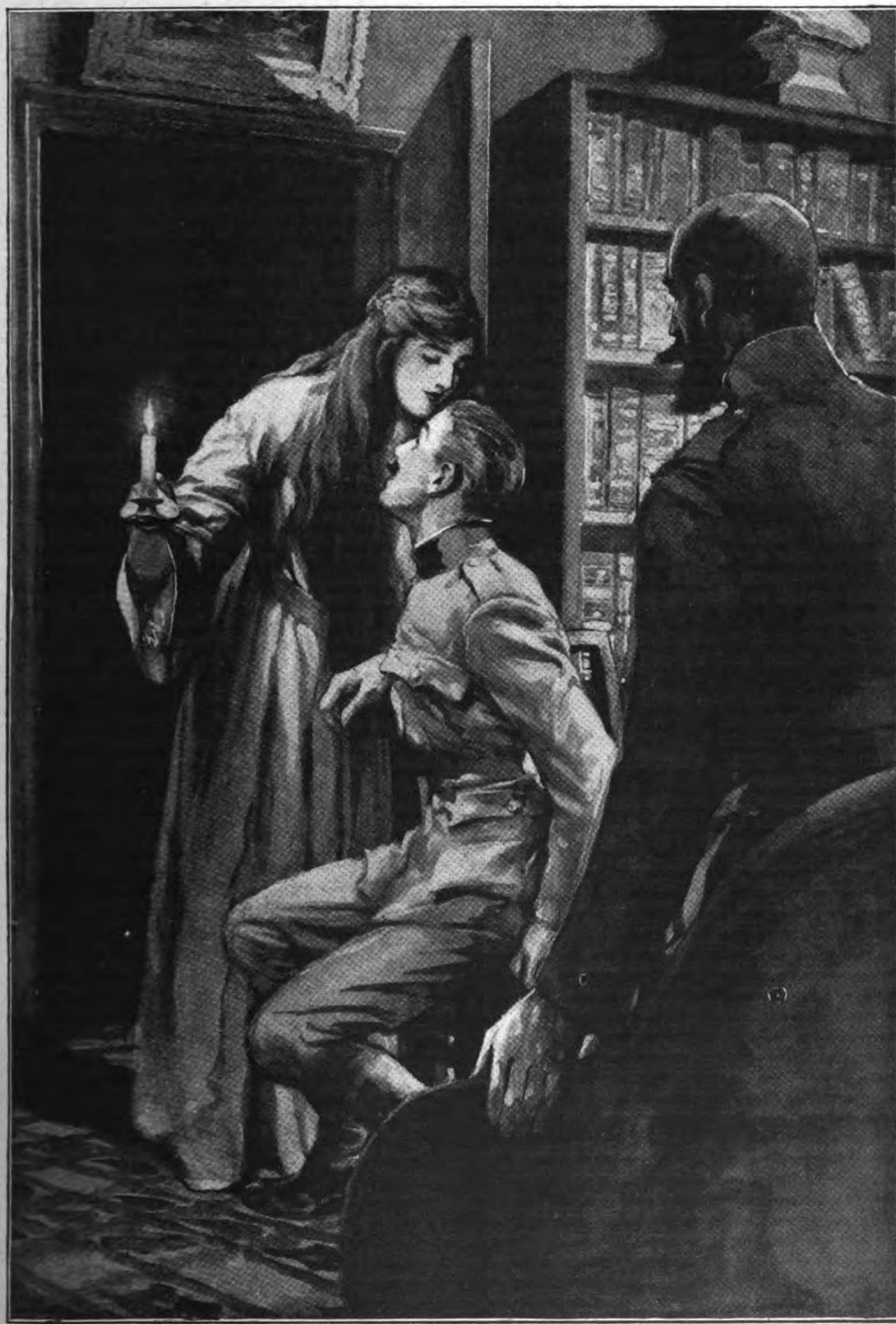
"I cannot imagine," he said, wearily.

He looked up to see Chassaigne staring in astonishment at the door behind his chair. Startled, he twisted himself round to see what was happening—and gasped.

Framed in the doorway, a dressing-gown over her night-attire, her dark hair loose over her shoulders, was the young woman. In her hand was a bedroom candle, alight. Her face was expressionless and placid. Her eyes were open, looked fixedly in front of her. She moved into the room with a gliding step.

"She is asleep!" whispered Chassaigne. "Speak to her, Vincent! Who knows? Perhaps another stratum of personality!"

The young woman glided straight towards the lieutenant, who gripped at the arm of his chair in his emotion. She was close upon him ere he could force himself to speech.



"'SHE IS ASLEEP!' WHISPERED CHASSAIGNE. THE YOUNG WOMAN GLIDED STRAIGHT TOWARDS THE LIEUTENANT, BENT OVER HIM, KISSED HIM SOFTLY UPON THE BROW."

"Hélène!" he said in a tense, low voice, looking up into her eyes as if trying to bring her dream down to him. "Do you know me?"

She bent over him, kissed him softly upon the brow.

"Maxime!" she murmured, her tone vibrant with tender affection. "Maxime! You have been away so long!"

She spoke in French!

Chassaigne jumped in his chair, but before he could utter a word a new voice spoke sharply.

"Ottilie!"

The two officers turned to the doorway to see Dr. Breidenbach standing there, his face clouded with menace, his eyes angry.

The young woman started, looked wildly about her in the bewilderment of one suddenly aroused from sleep. Then, after one horrified glance at her attire, an amazed stare at the two officers, she sank down on to a chair and covered her face with her hands. Trembling violently with every nerve of her body she crouched there in a misery of shame, too overwhelmed to utter a sound.

The German advanced into the room, stood over her.

"Ottilie! Come away at once!"

Vincent, now on his feet, flushed with rage at the brutal tone of the command, comprehensible enough to him despite his ignorance of the language.

Chassaigne went quietly behind the German, locked the door, and slipped the key in his pocket.

Breidenbach, his eyes fixed on the girl, reiterated his command.

"Monsieur!" broke from Vincent in an angry expostulation which ignored his comrade's gesture to silence.

The German looked round upon them, forcing his face to a smile in which the vivid blue eyes behind the pince-nez failed to participate.

"You are certainly entitled to some explanation of this unseemly occurrence, gentlemen," he said, in French. His voice, perfectly controlled and reinforcing his smile, suggested an appreciation of piquancy in this equivocal situation, invited the sense of humour of the Gallic temperament. "I need not tell you that Fräulein Rosenhagen is entirely innocent of any intent to disturb you. She is, I may say, under my medical care. She suffers from somnambulism, and you will understand that it is comprehensible she should wander to this room, where she is accustomed to receive treatment."

Vincent, with difficulty, controlled himself to silence in obedience to his friend's warning glance. Chassaigne stepped forward.

"Quite, monsieur," he said, easily, smiling as though he fully appreciated the position from all points of view. "A case of abnormal subconscious activity. I am myself greatly interested, professionally, in this common neuropathological symptom. May I suggest that, since your patient has come here in response to an obscure instinctive desire for the accustomed treatment of which she is doubtless in need, you now satisfy her? I should esteem it a privilege to assist at a demonstration of your methods."

The German's eyes flashed a suspicion that was instantly veiled.

"The hour is late, monsieur," he said, coldly.

Chassaigne shrugged his shoulders good-humouredly.

"In our profession, monsieur—the service of humanity," he said with sly malice, "one is on duty at all hours."

The German's eyes expressed frank hostility.

"I do not consider it advisable," he said. His tone was curt.

Chassaigne glanced at the young woman still crouched upon the chair.

"As a professional man of some experience, monsieur," he said, imperturbably, "I do not agree with you. I feel sure your patient would benefit by it. Let me beg of you!"

The German trembled with sudden anger.

"This is an unwarrantable interference, monsieur! The patient is in my charge. I decline absolutely!" He turned to the girl. 'Come, Ottilie!" he added, in German.

She ventured a shrinking glance up at him, stirred as if to rise.

Chassaigne raised his hand in a gesture which checked her. His eyes met the German's in a direct challenge.

"Unreasonable as it sounds, monsieur, I have set my heart upon witnessing your methods. It is a whim of the conqueror—the force of which you, who have served in Belgium, will appreciate." His right hand slid into the pocket of his tunic. "I must insist!"

"I refuse, then!" The German was livid with rage. He turned and plucked the girl violently from her seat. "Out of my way, monsieur!"

Dragging the girl after him, he took two steps towards the door—and stopped suddenly. Two more steps would have brought him into contact with the muzzle of the revolver which Chassaigne levelled at him.

"Foreseeing your possible ill-humour, monsieur," said the Frenchman, with a mocking suavity, "I took the precaution of locking the door. This young woman has inspired me with so violent an interest that I cannot bear to see her suffer unrelieved. And I might remind you that should you unfortunately lose your life by the accidental explosion of this revolver—I should find it comparatively easy to restore her to complete mental health myself."

The German glared at him.

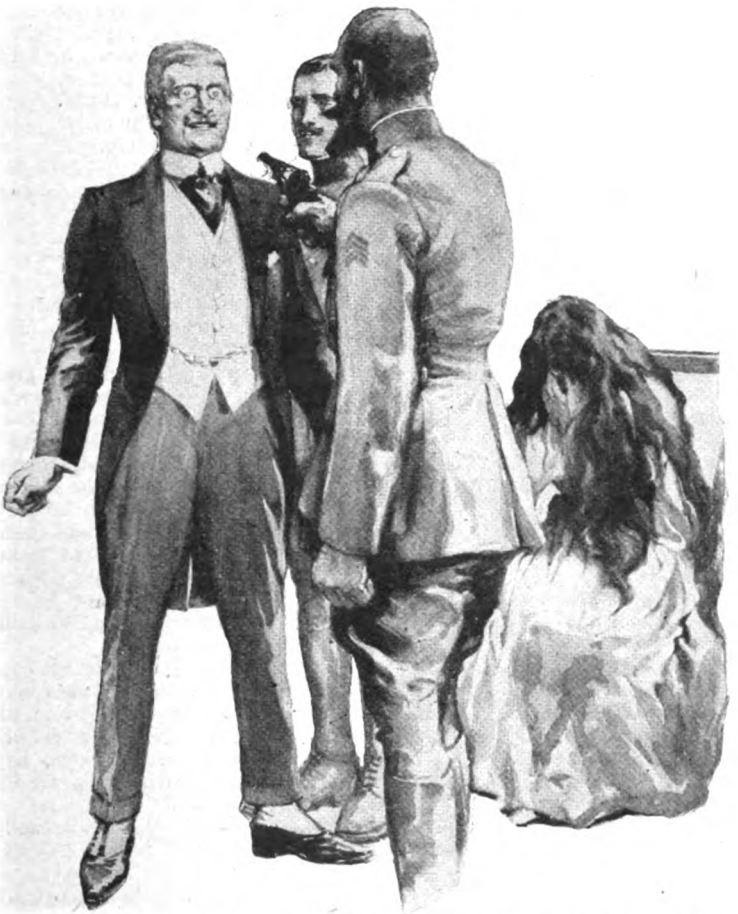
"I do not understand you!"

"You do—perfectly!" Chassaigne turned to his friend. "Vincent, conduct that young lady to a chair!"

The girl, who had been released by the German in the first shock of his surprise, stood paralyzed with terror, staring speechlessly at the revolver in Chassaigne's hand. Unresistingly, she allowed herself to be led to a seat by the young man, who was as speechless as she.

Chassaigne nodded satisfaction.

"Good! Now, Vincent, draw your revolver and cover this gentleman yourself. Be careful



"THE GERMAN GLARED AT HIM. 'I DO NOT UNDERSTAND!' 'YOU DO— PERFECTLY!'"

to hit him in a vital spot, should you be compelled to fire."

Vincent obeyed with alacrity, dandling the heavy weapon with fingers that evidently itched to pull the trigger.

"Monsieur," said Chassaigne with grim courtesy to the German, who had remained motionless under the menace of the revolver, "I invite you to take a seat. You may keep your hands on your knees, but do not move them until I give permission."

The German sat down heavily, his eyes gleaming evilly at the Frenchman.

"Now, monsieur," said Chassaigne, in succinct tones, "since you say you do not understand, I will be more explicit. I desire that you should induce in this young woman the hypnotic trance which is your habitual treatment for her indisposition——"

A gleam of cunning flitted in the German's eyes.

"Very well," he said, with sulky submission. "If you insist!"

"But with this difference," continued Chassaigne, "*that your habitual suggestion shall be reversed!*"

The German started—controlled himself quickly.

"I do not understand," he said, maintaining his pose of sulkiness.

"I mean that instead of suggesting to her that she is and always has been Ottilie Rosenhagen—you suggest to her that she is really Hélène Courvoisier, a French girl deported from Lille!"

The muscles stood out suddenly upon the German's lean jaws, even as, with a strength of will Chassaigne could not but admire, he smiled mockingly into his adversary's face.

"You rave, monsieur!" he said, and his tone emphasized the insult.

"Rave or not," replied Chassaigne, calmly, "I want you to try the experiment. It is a whim of mine." He handled the revolver suggestively.

"And if I refuse?"

"I shall shoot you!"

The German laughed outright.

"Ottilie!" he cried, in German, "these

Frenchmen have gone mad. They pretend that you are not Ottilie Rosenhagen but a French girl—and they want to take you from me!"

The girl sprang from her seat with a cry of horror, rushed to him, and flung her arms about him.

"Oh, no, no!" she cried. "I am German—I am German—I was never anything but German! Oh, don't take me away from him! I love him! I love him! He is all I have in the world!"

Vincent watched the action with jealous rage.

"My God!" he muttered. "I shall kill him in another moment if this goes on!"

The German smiled at them triumphantly.

"You see, gentlemen! Your suggestion is fantastic! This girl is my *fiancée*, and she is German to the core!"

Chassaigne's face was stern.

"Vincent! Remove the lady!"

The young man had to tear her by force from the German, who remained immobile in his chair in a mocking respect for the revolver.

"Fantastic or not," said Chassaigne, "I demand that you try the experiment. If you refuse—it is because you dare not do it!"

The German shrugged his shoulders.

"Very good, monsieur. I refuse. Think what you will!"

Chassaigne drew his watch from his pocket.

"I give you three minutes to decide," he said. "Vincent! Put the lady in that arm-chair and be ready to shoot when I give the word. Two bullets are more sure than one!"

The girl, dazed with fright, looking as though she were in some awful dream, collapsed nervelessly into the chair. Vincent posted himself by the German's side, his levelled revolver held just out of reach of a sudden snatch.

The German tried one more expostulation.

"This is madness!" he cried. "You surely do not propose to commit a cold-blooded murder!"

"One!" said Chassaigne, grimly. "Two more minutes, monsieur!"

The German laughed diabolically.

"Very well, then! Commit your murder! Much will it profit you! I am the only man in the world who can influence that young woman. Whatever you may think, you cannot transform her personality. Ottilie Rosenhagen she is and Ottilie Rosenhagen she will remain!"

"Two!" said Chassaigne.

"You may as well shoot now! Don't wait for the third!" jeered the German. "I deny that she is other than Ottilie Rosenhagen. I utterly refuse to experiment upon her at your dictation. Shoot! I defy you!" The man certainly did not lack courage. He smiled mockingly as Chassaigne's revolver rose slowly and deliberately to a level with his eyes. "Shoot! Outrage for outrage, your murder of a German civilian may well balance the deportations you prate about!" It was significant that in this fateful crisis it should be that particular crime which occurred to him for parity.

The taunt seemed to strike the spark of an idea in Chassaigne's brain. Still menacing the German with his revolver, he held out the key of the door in his left hand.

"Vincent! In Dr. Breidenbach's hall there is a telephone. A hundred yards away there is a post of infantry. Ring up the commandant, tell him that I have arrested Dr. Breidenbach on the charge of abducting a French subject, ask him to send along an armed escort at once—not less than half-a-dozen!" He glanced at the girl, who was apparently in a swoon upon her chair. "It is important that the force should be imposing! Hurry!"

Vincent snatched at the key, dashed from the room.

The German smiled in grim contempt. Chassaigne, still covering him with the revolver, smiled back, not less grimly. They waited in a complete silence, through minute after minute. The girl upon the chair did not stir.

Suddenly they heard the rhythmic tramp of a body of armed men on the gravel outside, a sharp voice of command, and then, after a brief pause, the heavy multiple tramp again, resounding through the house, louder and louder in its approach.

At the sound the girl sat up brusquely, stared wild-eyed at the door.

It was flung open. Vincent entered, pointed out the girl to the French officer who accompanied him, evidently in confirmation of a statement made outside. The officer barked an order. A file of helmeted infantrymen, bayoneted rifles at the slope, marched heavily into the room. The girl shrieked.

"Oh, no!-no! Don't take me!" she cried—*and her cry was French!* "Don't take me! I will not go! I will not go!" She sprang up from the chair, looked frenziedly around the room in a terror-stricken search for an avenue of escape. Her eyes fell upon Vincent, remained curiously fixed upon him.

Suddenly, with a cry of recognition, she rushed into his arms. "Maxime! Maxime! Protect me! Oh, don't let them take me! Don't let them take me!"

Chassaigne smiled. He had won. As he expected, the shock of this armed entry, so vividly recalling the night of terror in Lille when the girl-victims were snatched from their violated homes, had sufficed to re-awaken the personality which had then agonized in its last moments of freedom.

Vincent enfolded her, murmuring reassuring words as he caressed the head that hid itself upon his breast. Her body shook with violent sobs.

The German stood up, placed himself, with a shrug of the shoulders, between the double file of infantrymen. The officer produced a note-book, asked a few questions of Chassaigne, jotted down the replies. He turned to the girl.

"Your name, mademoiselle?"

She looked up.

"Hélène Courvoisier," she replied, unhesitatingly.

AGE 8.

WE TWO & FRIENDS

by

Ellaline Terriss & Seymour Hicks

ELLALINE TERRISS AND SEYMOUR HICKS IN "GARRICK."
Photo. Foulsham & Banfield.

OURS is an awful past — according to the people who boast of knowing more about our affairs than we know ourselves. We were warned what would happen, after it became known that we had stolen away to a registry office "down Brentford way," where we had been united for better or worse. Seymour was the "villain" of the piece; Ellaline the innocent, unfortunate "victim," who had thrown herself away and entirely ruined her career. That Irish stew and Burgundy, which comprised our wedding breakfast at the Café Monico, should have been a meal of tears, melancholy, and regrets instead of one of unalloyed joy. Lightheartedly we embarked on the great adventure. We were young, romantic, ambitious, and full of hope for the future. The only fly in the ointment at the time was that William Terriss had not given his consent to the marriage. In fact, he had forbidden it, and had he been in London at the time, it is probable that a certain proposal which was made, accepted, and discussed with excited happiness twenty-five years ago in a carriage on the Underground Railway would have resulted in long and impatient waiting. But he was in America. A dutiful daughter, however, urged by an impatient wooer, thought it advisable to cable :—

"Dearest Father—May I be engaged to Seymour Hicks? Love, ELLA."

Anxiously we waited the reply. It came: "Certainly not. Wait until I return. Writing. FATHER."

SEYMOUR HICKS—AGE 17.
Photo. W. & D. Downey

SEYMOUR HICKS IN A CHILDREN'S PERFORMANCE OF "H.M.S. PINAFORE."
Photo. F. C. Bird, Bath.

ELLALINE TERRISS IN "THE GAY GORDONS."

Photo. Fowsham & Banfield.

SEYMOUR HICKS AND ELLALINE TERRISS AS THEMSELVES.

Photo. Jas. Bacon & Sons, Newcastle.

Photo Fowsham & Banfield.

That meant months before we could even become engaged. Obviously impossible, to lovelorn two-and-twenty. Aided and abetted by a loving mother, we bought a special licence, went down to Brentford in the worst-looking hansom I have ever seen, and got married. At that time we were both appearing at the Court Theatre under the management of our old friend and benefactor, Arthur Chudleigh, who had introduced the "villain" to the "victim" in the first place. His face, when we broke the news of our marriage to him during that night's performance, was a study.

"Why, hang it," he said, "I wanted to marry the girl myself."

With some trepidation we awaited the return of the "stern father." By that time, however, our fortunes had, thanks to offers made to us by George Edwardes for the Gaiety, improved to such an extent that within a few weeks of our marriage we had an income of two thousand five hundred a year. "Breezy Bill," as everyone called him, was so pleased when he returned with the excellent financial prospects the Gaiety contracts gave us that, although he wished we had waited, he slapped the "villain" on the back, kissed the "victim," and told her she deserved all the good luck she got.

He was one of the most genial of souls, and everybody loved him. But he could administer a hard knock when occasion required.

"Dear Mr. Terriss," wrote a wholesale provision-dealer, "could you let me have a box or four stalls to see 'The Harbour Lights'? Thanking you in anticipation, I am, yours, etc., J. ARMITAGE."

To this example of the barefaced effrontery of dead-heads, Terriss replied:—

"Dear Mr. Armitage,—With all the pleasure in the world, and would you let me have two dozen eggs, a side of bacon, and a dozen pots of jam for home use? Thanking you, but without the slightest anticipation, I am, yours, etc., WILLIAM TERRISS."

We were fortunate in our real friends—the friends that count—those who, by their kindly interest, counsel, and practical help, assisted us on our way.

The opportunity to pay tribute to those real friends cannot be resisted. Barrie, the kindest and gentlest of critics, the man who never made an enemy in his life; Gillette, the ever-urbane, the prototype of the gentle, cynical Sherlock Holmes he so wonderfully portrayed; Charlie Brookfield, whose witticisms have been fathered on to hundreds of dullards; Frohman, king of managers; Gilbert, greatest of librettists; Irving, the autocrat; Mrs. Kendal, "Ma K." as we were wont to call her, the greatest of stage-mistresses; Pinero, who loves his gibe; Toole, the innocent joker; Tree and Wyndham, best of Garrick members—all these and many others, whom we omit owing to limits of space and not lack of thought, we are proud to think of as among our greatest friends.

ELLALINE TERRISS IN "THE GAY GORDONS."
Photo. Foulsham & Banfield.

Gillette we first met when we went to America, before opening at the Gaiety. He is a charming and delightful man, and it was when he asked us both to go and spend a holiday on his steam sea-going houseboat-yacht, *Pretty Polly*, in which speed was sacrificed to comfort, that he told us this story.

He had left New York about a fortnight, and had arrived by gentle stages at a point which would have taken a fast boat about two days, and the seafaring wag, noticing the speed of the comfortable craft beneath him, sang out: "Hi! mister, when did you leave New York?" "On the third of the month," replied Gillette. "Really?" shouted the sailor again. "What year?"

Barrie was our theatrical fairy godfather, and perhaps the quiet rebuke he once administered to his child, Seymour, is the best example of his gentle art of teaching a lesson. The occasion was the production of his first play, "Walker, London." The first night was a huge success, and the flattering notices next day caused not a few swelled heads. Not the least swollen was that of a young man named Hicks, who, when Barrie asked him if he would go down to Sandwich to play cricket for him against the local fire brigade, said he would be delighted, but it was quite impossible, as he would not be able to get back to London in time to act at night.

"Oh, don't bother about that," said Barrie, smilingly. "You can put on an understudy."

We have often tried to imagine

A CLEVER PIECE OF MAKE-UP: SEYMOUR HICKS AS SCROOGE.
Photo. Ellis & Walery.

the agonies Barrie must have suffered when he watched us at the first rehearsals of our favourite play, "Quality Street." As time went on, he never said very much, and we thought everything was satisfactory. About the end of the third week, however, as we were lunching one day, he said: "It is all very good, your reading of the play, but I think I should alter the whole idea." He made this momentous remark as calmly as though he were telling us we should have a change of weather.

Granville Barker, too, no doubt appreciated quite as much as we did the delicate shaft aimed at him by Barrie at a certain rehearsal. Barker was rather inclined to expect the ordinary actor to be as finished an artiste as himself, and to convey by look and movement possibilities that the dialogue did not suggest. Barrie waited awhile, and then quietly called out to one of the actors:—

"Mr. Smith, would you mind coming slowly down the stage, and when you have said your lines, I want you to turn your back to the audience and convey to them that you have a brother who drinks port in Shropshire."

Irving and "Ma K.," too, were our good sponsors. The "victim" recalls her first meeting with Irving when he was living at The Grange, Hammersmith, and taking part in a little play for the amusement of Ellen Terry and himself, the cast including Gordon Craig, Edie Terry, and Violet Vanbrugh. Which recalls to the "villain" a memorable visit he paid one Sunday afternoon, with Toole, Irving, and Pinero, to George Meredith at Boxhill, and a remark of the great novelist which he has never forgotten.

Irving was discussing the condition of the stage and the lack of rising actresses with Meredith. "Ah! my dear Irving," said he, as he shook hands at parting, "we have no young actresses now; they are all vulgar young women who laugh from their stomachs."

Irving, too, had a sly dig at the "villain" after seeing him in a French farce.

"Well, you're at the comedy

IN "BROADWAY JONES."

ELLALINE TERRISS IN "THE DASHING LITTLE DUKE."

Photos Foulsham & Banfield.

game, I see, eh? Do you know, you remind me of Charles Mathews; very like him, very."

"I'm so glad," replied the proud Hicks.

"Yes," he continued, "you wear the same sort of collars!"

With regard to "Ma K.," the Matron of the Drama, she frightened the "villain" to death in his early days. "Act! How can you hope to act, my dear Hicks, before you know how to walk the stage?" She taught him to walk it—taught him all he knew; which may not be much, but it is not her fault.

"Why did you move then?" was a thing she often said, and if the reply was "I don't know," she would rap out, "Then for Heaven's sake keep still unless you have a reason." Her remarks on stage pauses, too, were illuminating. Her motto was: "Never pause on the stage unless it is necessary; but if you do pause, pause for an hour if you want to."

The old Gaiety days, however, were our happiest. What a happy family we were—Harry Monkhouse, Arthur Williams, Edmund Payne, George Grossmith, Junr., Connie Ediss, Katie Seymour, and Ethel Haydon, with "Pa" Edwardes smiling genially upon us. Occasionally we find ourselves humming Leslie Stuart's first success, "Louisiana Lou," the "victim's" chief song in "The Shop Girl," and "Her Golden Hair was Hanging Down her Back," which the "villain" had the good luck to pick up in America, and which helped to establish him at the Gaiety.

What memories they recall, and what a nasty knock the "villain" received one Monday night for his audacity towards one of the show girls in "The Shop Girl"! She was an incorrigible talker, and on this particular night was relating a week-end experience so loudly while he sang about the girl and the hair, that he determined to give her a lesson.

"One moment," he said to Ivan Caryll, who was conducting. The band stopped suddenly. "Dear lady," he said, turning to her, intending to frighten her out of her wits, "will you finish your story or shall I finish my song?" Not the least taken aback, she stepped down to his side and said: "Do you know, dearie, it's a matter of the utmost indifference to me what you do." And the "villain" retired with his tail between his legs, while the house rocked.

The nastiest of all, however, was when the "villain" was pursuing the innocent "victim" at the Court Theatre between the performances of "The Other Fellow."

"A young gentleman by the name of Hicks played the part of the other brother," wrote that prince of critics, Clement Scott. "No doubt he will become a real idol of the public, for he shouts so loudly that they will always be able to hear him by standing outside on the pavement, and will never be obliged to pay to go in and see him."

And both got nasty knocks when we made a second visit to America—the "villain" in "The Shop Girl" and the "victim" in "His Excellency the Governor." Owing to the success we had made of various songs and business imported from America, we had acquired the rather unfair reputation of taking all we could lay our hands on. Consequently there was a mild campaign against us, and we were tickled when someone christened the "villain" "Stealmore Bricks," and the newspapers came out with such headlines as "Canadians Beware—Seymour Hicks is in town. Padlock your gags," or "Nail everything you have; Hicks, the real live broncho man, is among you."

One thing we did annex while we were there; that was a farce—"A Night Out"—which had been refused by all the English managers. We persuaded Frohman to let us take it to London, and it ran for six hundred nights at the Vaudeville, clearing in town and provinces thirty-two thousand pounds in profit.

Talking of personal comments, the best story we can call to mind is that of an unrehearsed incident at the Richmond Theatre, which we enjoyed not so many years ago.

A gentleman who was playing the part of the Cardinal, in "Under the Red Robe," was extremely bad. The audience had been fidgety throughout the evening. At the end of the last act all the characters in the play attack the Cardinal, and he, finding himself alone and without power, turns on his tormentors, crying: "Am I, then, only a howling pelican in the wilderness?" A man in the pit rose, saying: "Oh, is that it? I've been wondering what the deuce you were all the evening."

Frohman was our closest friend, and nothing gave us so much pleasure as when we received a wire from him saying that he had concluded an agreement with the Messrs. Gatti by which we were to be under his joint direction with them at the Vaudeville Theatre for five years. The arrangement continued at the Vaudeville Theatre and afterwards at the Aldwych for ten years—the busiest of our life.

The production of such plays as "Alice in Fairyland," "Bluebell," "Sweet and Twenty," "The Earl and the Girl," "The Beauty of Bath," "The Gay Gordons," "The Catch of the Season," and others, entailed such an enormous amount of work that it left us little time for anything but a desire for rest. However, we had the consolation of knowing that they were years crowded with success. The last-mentioned play will ever be a happy memory to us, for it was during the run of that piece that our daughter Betty was born.

It was Frohman who told us the best stories of Barrie.

"A little man—wise, whimsical, and witty. He is as simple as a shepherd-boy, and as shy as a young girl just home from a boarding-school," was his description of the dramatist.

"I once went to Kensington to dine with him," he told us, "hoping to talk over some points in 'The Little Minister.' During the two hours I was there he didn't utter more than twenty sentences, and only two of these related to 'The Little Minister.' They were exactly alike, and consisted of two words, 'Quite right'!"

The Service Revolver

By HAROLD STEEVENS

ILLUSTRATED BY NORAH SCHLEGEL

"I'VE always heard"—the lady cashier spoke with aggravating detachment—"that those who know most about firearms are the most careful. It's the same with boats, and mountaineering, and——"

"Babies!" interjected Ralph Warrender, overbold.

Flushing ever so slightly, Gertrude Cardigan opened her cashbook and took up her pen, murmuring as though it were an afterthought: "*You* seem rather careless."

It was his turn to flush; youthful vanity had not quite deserted him. He took his rebuke in good part, however; his exposition of the use of the weapon had certainly been a little florid.

"I deserve it," he admitted. "But you asked me to show you, didn't you?"

"I hope you have a gun licence?"—she continued her raillery. "That would make it safer, wouldn't it?"

"We don't call them guns in the——"

"You're not in the Army now. You're in the Bank."

He grunted—began an exclamation.

"Stop!" she said. "This is not the Officers' Mess. Now put it away, there's a good little boy. Unload! Dismiss! Get on with your work! Or rather, give it to me—most dangerous weapon for one so young. No, better put it in my drawer yourself—of course, I'm frightened to touch it. You shall have it back when it's time for you to go home."

Speechless and admiring, ex-Captain Ralph Warrender, M.C., gazed for a moment at the teazing little lady. Then, to humour her, he put the service revolver carefully away in the back of her cash drawer.

"The four-five-five cartridges too," she said, affecting the superior tone of the expert—she had never heard of them till three minutes ago.

He laughed and obeyed, then stooped and jerked a £100 bag of silver from floor to counter (surprisingly easier, this, than it was five years since!), untied the neck, tipped out the money, and threw the empty bag under his desk.

"You're right," he said. "Work's the word. Last day of the year; we'll get it in the neck."

"What are you going to do with it?" she asked after a minute's silence.

"Fourteen, eighteen, twenty," muttered Warrender, flicking the florins into his hand. "What? The neck? Oh, the revolver. Pawn it! Anything for an honest living. Sha'n't want it any more. Better without it. Five, ten, fifteen, nineteen, and one's twenty. Don't chatter while I'm counting." And he added another little pile of silver to the phalanx growing up on the mahogany before him.

"Hoity, toity! You're not in charge of a Chinese Labour Battalion now, sir!" cried the girl.

"Never was, thank goodness. My manners have gone to pieces—if I ever had any. Sorry."

When the first hundred was counted out and tucked away in £5 paper bags, he heaved up another for himself and one for her.

"You're a good fellow after all," said she, relenting.

"Too heavy for the weaker sex—twenty-five pounds avoirdupois, to be precise."

She chose to ignore the chaff in his remark. "They break me up—or, rather, did, before you came," she said. "I'm ever so grateful."

"*Pas de quoi, m'selle!*"

"But I am. Come back all the nasty things I said about the pistol."

"You didn't, and you couldn't," he answered, with perilous warmth.

"Very well, I have wings. We won't quarrel about it. Did you do jerks?"

"Yes, rather, when I was in the ranks. Carried ammunition-boxes too. Lord, what a weight! You got used to it, though."

"All the better for me." Her smile wrenched his heart.

Presently the customers began to come in, and the two cashiers had no more time for banter; they were pretty well snowed under.

The branch was sadly shorthanded. Two at the counter instead of three, and two clerks instead of four behind; the accountant and the apprentice away with 'flu; the manager holding on by force of will when he ought to be in bed.

They worked in grim silence till lunch-time, ran out in turns, leaving their desks piled up with stuff; back again, and instantly in the thick of it—taking in, paying out, counting, weighing, calling for passbooks, explaining, advising; cool, concentrated, courteous, ever on the watch for the insidious stumer, the stopped cheque, the forged Bradbury.

It was a battle of two against an army advancing in continuous waves, with a never-ending stream of reinforcements behind it.

From time to time Warrender turned to glance at the lagging clock; his expression of resentment would have been comical if either of the groaning clerks had been looking for humour. They were not.

At last the minute-hand edged up to closing hour.

Before it quite touched, Warrender paused in the act of examining a credit slip.

"Jones!" he called, gazing across the office to where the resident messenger sat musing on his high stool.

"Jones!" more insistently.

Jones sat up with a jerk. The cashier caught his eye and looked significantly at the clock.

"R. D." he muttered. Jones slid off his stool and marched with stately step to the street door, closed it, and stood by to let the remaining customers out. In five minutes the counter was clear.

Warrender breathed deeply. "What a dog-fight!" he gasped. "You're *bon* cashier and no mistake," he added, looking at her with whole-hearted respect. "Dashed if you haven't taken in more stuff than I have myself," and he glanced at the mountain of cheques on her desk.

"Language, come!" she said, with a shadowy smile; then climbed on her stool and attacked her cashbook with swift, unflurried pen.

It took them a solid half-hour to enter up their books. Then they balanced their cash and got it down below into the safe, with the reluctant assistance of Jones.

"Always was a bit sorry for himself; taciturn old blighter!" said Warrender, as they mounted the stairs together.

"He's not exactly chatty," she answered. Her voice had lost its fresh timbre of the morning.

Warrender looked into her face. The glow was gone from her cheeks, the provoking sparkle from her eyes. "You're tired, aren't you?" he asked, with concern. "No wonder. Get along to the women's quarters and have a rest and a smoke. I'll send out for some tea."

"That'll be lovely!"

"Wish you didn't have to stay to-night."

"Nonsense! I'll be as fresh as a lark, directly."

When she was gone the manager came up.

"Miss Cardigan looks fagged," he said. "If she'd rather go home . . . ." He paused and scratched his head.

"She won't, sir. Wild tanks wouldn't drag her away before we've got out the balance."

"The women are splendid," said the manager. "I was dead against them at first, but now I should be very sorry to lose them. I'll run out for a snack now and count the cash when I come back."

"Right-o, sir!" said Warrender. "We'll get on with the Clean Cash Book."

Again the manager hesitated. "It's irregular," he said, doubtfully. "But there's nobody else to do it." He shrugged his shoulders and went out.

"Letters ready, Jones," the junior clerk shouted across the office.

Jones looked up with a pained expression; then, silent and aggrieved, he took the bag and went off to the post.

Coming back by the short cut through a neighbouring court, he heard his name called from a doorway.

"Mr. Jones—good evening, sir. Last night of the year—I suppose you bankers'll be burning the midnight oil as usual?"

"I *'ate* these balance nights," said Jones.

"Don't wonder. Too much of it, eh? Have one before you go in?"

"I sha'n't say no, Triplow," said Jones, a little mollified. Then savagely again: "But I take precious good care *I* don't do much."

"Not likely. Why should you? You've done enough in your time."

Jones's spirit was soothed. He could swallow much flattery.

His friend was a man of his own height and build, though younger. Their acquaintance was not of long standing—five or six weeks at the most—but it had that genial touch which springs from regular association in the same private bar, where the curious likeness between the two men gave rise to much simple jocularity. Triplow, for his part, had had considerable success in drawing out Jones, who thus acquired a certain eminence among the *habitués* which he had not previously enjoyed. Jones attributed this pleasant change primarily to his own merit; at the same time it disposed him kindly towards the younger man.

They had a beer apiece, and the glasses were refilled. Triplow now drew the messenger aside.

"I want to ask a favour, Mr. Jones," he said. Jones contrived to conceal his enthusiasm. Triplow lowered his voice and winked. "Matter of a little legacy," he said. Jones endeavoured to show that his previous coldness was only superficial.

"There's one or two papers to sign," continued Triplow, confidentially. "I'd like you to have a squint at 'em if you will—you're a business man; you'll get the hang of it in two shakes of a lamb's tail."

Jones raised his glass and spoke: "Here's wishing many years to enjoy it." He took a draught, looked at Triplow, and made a grimace.

"Thanks, friend," said Triplow. "You're right; it is a bit thin. Have something in it to warm it up! Do!"

He took the glass from Jones's unresisting hand, carried it to the bar and had a double gin added to the beer.

"Now that's worth drinking!" cried Jones, smacking his lips. Indeed, so good was it that

Triplow had little difficulty in persuading him to "try just one more—it's a poor heart that never rejoices." The legatee himself drank the thin beer with nothing to it.

The bank messenger was not one who believed in putting himself about for the benefit of his friends, but in this case vanity, cupidity, and dog's nose combined to overcome his principles. He magnanimously consented to step across the court to Triplow's place and give his expert advice in the matter of the little legacy. His face glowed in the cold night air.

"It's a bit dim," said Triplow. "We'll soon get a light though. Let me go first."

He took out his latchkey, turned into a dark passage and threw open a door, then stood civilly aside.

"Age before honesty," he said, jocosely. "Straight on; that's right—now one step up."

Jones lifted his foot and trod heavily—on air, for the step was not up but down. Triplow following close behind bumped hard into him.

A startled exclamation broke from the messenger's lips. He flung out his arms to save himself, clutched at space, plunged forward, and fell head first on the floor of Triplow's room.

Triplow stepped quickly inside and bolted the door. The room was perfectly dark.

"Hurt, old man?" he asked, with assumed anxiety. "Did you miss your footing?" Without waiting for an answer he added: "Try a sniff of this—it'll pull you round quicker than anything." Saying which he stooped, felt for the face of the prostrate man, and clapped a soaked handkerchief to his nose.

Jones, half drunk and half stunned, had no thought to resist the sweet, insidious vapour; nor was he in a condition to do so if he would. He took a deep breath, then another. As consciousness faded, he raised a feeble hand to push away the thing that was submerging him; but it was too late. Triplow easily put the hand aside and the sinking man acquiesced; he moved no more. The chloroformer re-wetted the handkerchief.

After some minutes he stood up and lit the gas. Returning to the body, he first appropriated the bank's keys, then with some trouble divested the prostrate Jones of his plum-coloured swallowtail and trousers, yellow-striped waistcoat, dickie, necktie, and boots.

Next he took a hank of cord and tied Jones's legs together above the ankles; in like manner he bound his arms behind his back. He also forced open his mouth and slipped a wooden gag between the teeth. Then he threw off his own clothes, dropping them on Jones, and dressed himself up in the antique but telling livery of the Kingdom Bank.

Walking over to the mirror, he opened a little wooden box and proceeded to "make-up his face." He handled the paints deftly, with only an occasional glance at the figure on the floor. After three or four minutes' work his hair was grey, his face lined and blotchy. He took down the glass, stood over the body and, studying the upturned features intently, compared them with his own. Satisfied, he picked up Jones's silk hat from the floor, brushed it with his sleeve, and put it on.

Finally, he put the keys in his pocket, picked up Jones's letter-bag, and took a quick but comprehensive look round the room. His eye lighted on his overcoat; he took it down and threw it over Jones, went out and locked the door.

Three minutes brought him to the bank. He let himself in with Jones's key, and simulating Jones's rather pompous deportment walked across the office to Jones's desk. He hung up Jones's hat on its peg, sat down on Jones's stool, took up Jones's evening paper and began to read, even as did Jones, invariably, when any late work was toward in the office.

The two cashiers, man and girl, glanced up, but that was all. They had finished their tea and were grappling with the Clean Cash Book. This august tome, full bound in red leather with its name in golden letters on the back and side, lay open on the counter. Other volumes of heroic magnitude but less nobly decorated lay piled about.

"RETURNING TO THE BODY, HE TIED JONES'S LEGS TOGETHER ABOVE THE ANKLES; IN LIKE MANNER HE BOUND HIS ARMS BEHIND HIS BACK."

The two clerks, having struggled through the day's work proper, were battening on buns at a neighbouring tea-shop, fortifying themselves for a heavy night with ledgers and passbooks. They cheered their sorrow by speculating on the prospect of overtime pay (it may be remarked that the prospect was black) and intermittently abusing the apprentice—cub-like and insufferable at all times—for his impudence in having 'flu on balance night.

The manager came in from his hasty dinner.

"I'll count the cash now, Mr. Warrender," he said.

"WALKING OVER TO THE MIRROR, HE OPENED A LITTLE WOODEN BOX AND PROCEEDED TO 'MAKE-UP HIS FACE.'"

"Right, sir," answered Ralph. "Confounded nuisance," he growled under his breath. "Can you carry on, Miss Cardigan? Don't bust yourself over it."

"Leave it to me," said Gertrude, airily.

Ralph grinned and hurried off, muttering to himself as he went: "Little sport! Blow the accountant! Blow the Bank! Blow everybody—bar one!"

Down below, producing separate keys, they unlocked the strong-room, hauled back the massive door, switched on the light, and went inside. Similarly they unlocked the inner cash safe. A pair of brass cash scales stood on a broad steel shelf. Ralph took out the cash—bundle after bundle of notes, orange bags of gold, dirty white bags of silver, paper rolls of plebeian copper—and dumped it on the shelf.

The manager began to count.

"I've applied to H. O. for assistance," he observed, between two bundles of notes. "We can't go on like this. Somebody should be here on Thursday. What a nuisance this paper money is, to be sure!"

"Takes a lot of counting, sir."

The manager's only answer was to damp his finger and bend again to the work, while the cashier watched attentively, with a fresh bundle in his hand.

Meanwhile, in the office above, the false Jones got off his stool and solemnly drew down the blinds. Gertrude looked up in mild surprise, for, since Armistice night, the real Jones had steadfastly refrained from such unnecessary exertion. But she wasted no thought on the matter.

Triplow then wandered across the office to the staircase and went downstairs. He took up Jones's bucket of wetted sawdust, placed it noisily on the platform of the hydraulic lift, and raised the lever. Up went the lift, blocking the square railed space in the office floor.

"What's that?" said the manager, his nerves all ajar.

"Only Jones going to sweep up," said Warrender, looking out into the corridor. When Triplow walked past the strong-room door on his way to fetch the broom they were intent on their work, their backs to the door and their heads bent over the steel shelf.

In a moment Triplow came leisurely back. He carried no broom, however. His right hand was feeling in the pocket of Jones's waistcoat, and instead of walking past the strong-room he turned sharply into it.

Physiologically considered, the sudden transition from the lethargic condition of a Jones to the intense activity of a wild beast was remarkable. Unfortunately for themselves, the manager and his cashier were not in a position to observe this interesting phenomenon.

Whipping out his hand and raising it above his head, Triplow delivered two lightning blows of tigerish power and precision on the bent necks of the bankers. Almost simultaneously, and without a cry, they fell forward on the steel shelf as though to cover with their inert bodies the treasure which they could no longer protect with mind and hand.

Triplow put down his weapon—a leather-covered lead paper-weight from Jones's desk—seized the men in turn under the armpits, and laid them on the floor, dr wing them inside as far as the dimensions of the strong-room allowed. Then he felt under the shelf and pulled out two strong leather handbags, of the kind which banks use for carrying notes and specie. His hours with Jones in the Blue Boar had not been wasted.

Gertrude, poring over the Clean Cash Book with pencil and a scrap of paper covered with figures, heard nothing from the underground regions of the bank, thanks to Triplow's criminal precaution and executive skill. At least, she would have said—and subsequently did say—that she heard nothing. More probably a hyper-sense of hearing detected a change in the quality of the silence.

Or possibly—sensitive, sympathetic, vibrant inheritor of the magical quintessence of woman as she was—some faculty of perception even more refined and elusive apprised her brain of something which it had not the power to interpret. And this hypothesis is the more feasible in that to-night her indomitable spirit was much

"TRIPLOW SEIZED THE MEN IN TURN UNDER THE ARMPITS AND LAID THEM ON THE FLOOR."

in the ascendant over the flagging body. Moreover, disguise it as she might, her heart was very tender towards her gallant *confrère*.

The simple fact is that, for no reason which she could have given, she paused in her work, put down her pencil, and walked softly across to the staircase. She was conscious neither of fear nor even of apprehension; it was simply that she must go and look. So she tiptoed down the stairs until, by bending over, she could peer along the passage to the strong-room. What she saw made her heart stand still.

Two pairs of feet lay across the threshold—she knew whose they must be. Limp, abnormal, pathetic, they shocked her the more because she must imagine the rest. Ah! was he——? She drove the worst thought from her.

Above and astride of them stood Jones (as she thought)—the treacherous fiend!—packing notes and gold into a handbag. The callousness evident in his collected demeanour and methodical movements chilled her blood.

Instinctively her lips parted, but before the cry could come her quick brain sprang into command; she forced her lips together and pressed them tight. Then, ever so lightly, while her eyes watched the enemy, she stepped backwards up the stairs and ran, striving against panic, to the street door.

She turned the knob. To her surprise and relief, she felt it give inwards, and, as she naturally drew back, a well-dressed man wearing a top-hat and dark overcoat stepped quickly over the threshold and closed the door behind him.

She was panting from exertion and excitement, and spoke hurriedly between gasps: "He's robbing the safe! I think he's killed the manager and—oh, please fetch a police——"

A large hand was over her mouth, a powerful arm round her waist, and she was pushed helplessly back into the office.

"I know all about it," said a businesslike voice, with an undernote of fierceness in it, while hard eyes stared into hers. "If you holler it'll be the worse for you and the others too. Go back and keep quiet."

For answer she struggled desperately and tore at his hand.

"Oh, very well, if you won't——" The pressure on her mouth and nostrils increased, hermetically sealing her lungs. Compared with his, her strength was nothing. She could not breathe; her chest was bursting; her head began to swim. In terror of fainting, she nodded her head. The hand was withdrawn.

"Now you go behind there and mind what I said. If you don't——" She read the ruthlessness of the man in his voice.

But she was one of those to whom a command is the signal for revolt. Bruised and sickened as she was by his detestable handling, resentment flamed up and revived her. She marshalled her wits, her eyes glittered—decidedly they were not eyes of the vanquished. Her brain was groping for something, something she knew might help—if she could only think what it was! Screaming would be worse than useless; and, anyhow, she had given her word and preferred to keep it, even with a ruffian.

Triplow, that accomplished criminal dressed as Jones, now came upstairs and marched calmly through the office from the stair-head on his way to the street door, a weighty bag in either hand. He betrayed no excitement, though he saw, of course, that something had gone awry, otherwise why was his confederate in the office at all? It was a contingency which he had foreseen, however, and his arrangements were apparently working perfectly well.

Watchful and cunning, he read the girl's face as he passed. He perceived the glint of fire in her eye, the resolution in her firm-shut lips; knew also as by divination that she had pierced his disguise, and recognized the consummate self-control which enabled her to suppress any outward sign of her discovery.

Triplow had a keen scent for danger, and never ignored it, even from so fragile a quarter as this. He shot a composite glance of inquiry and warning at the silk-hatted one.

"O. K., Charlie," said the latter, readily interpreting the signal; "I'm fly." He lifted his hand to the level of the counter, and a small polished pistol flashed in the light.

Gertrude saw it and started in alarm, then felt her brain leap and grasp that for which it had been groping. The service revolver!

Her pulses raced. Could she? Dare she? She was the only one now; the honour of the branch, of them all, was in her hands; if *she* failed—— She thought, as she had never ceased to think, of the brave dear lad lying helple s down there. If only he were here! Ah! she must, she would act worthily! The danger to herself from these brutes, if she should cross them—that was nothing.

Cunning against cunning! Simulating despair, she leaned against her desk and covered her face with her hands. Her sigh was not entirely wasted. Then, obviously seeking diversion from her misery, she languidly pulled open her drawer and began to grope at the back of it.

From the street came the sound of a taxi-cab drawing up opposite the bank and throbbing noisily.

"All right outside, Tom?" asked Triplow, in a low voice, as he passed the other.

"That's Nip, Charlie."

"I'll get the stuff in. You watch the girl. There's nobody else."

Gertrude (how she blessed Ralph for his instructions of the morning) had cautiously opened the breech and fitted two stumpy cartridges to the cylinder, when Tom, suddenly suspicious, lifted his pistol.

"Put up your hands!" he ordered, sharply.

She kept her nerve. She snapped the breech shut and her left hand went up, empty; but her right held the service revolver—pointed at the robber.

Her hand was shaking; the weapon was heavy. She clutched it desperately, with her finger on the trigger.

"Crash!" In the confined space of the office the report was terrific.

Unaccustomed to the sound of firearms, she thought the walls and ceiling must be tumbling in. Her wrist was surely broken and her arm paralyzed! She was badly scared, and had a wild desire to throw the venomous weapon away from her and flee.

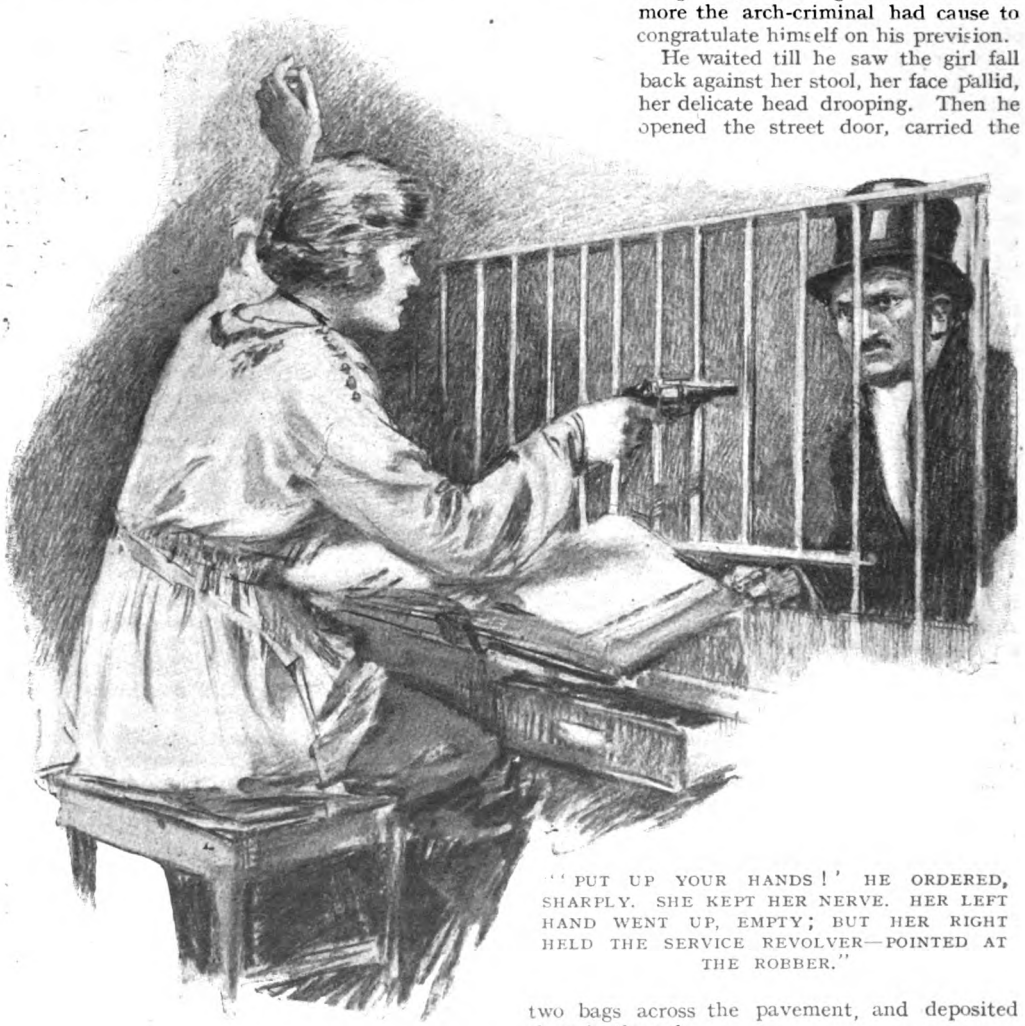
Tom ducked, with an oath, but not before he had felt the heavy bullet fly buzzing past his ear. The shock to his nerves caused him to forget himself so far as to use an expression best confined to the kennels.

Pushing the muzzle of his pocket pistol through the brass grille and taking careful aim, he fired at the girl.

"Ping!" It was like a popgun after the loud detonation of the '45. But the tiny bullet found its mark. A spot of crimson appeared on the sleeve of Gertrude's putty-coloured jumper close up to the shoulder. The revolver dropped from her hand and clattered on the counter.

Triplow at the street door, one bag on the mat and a hand on the door-knob, stopped dead when he heard the first crash. His eyes were on the scene within, but his ears were straining for sounds from without. Yet the office bell did not clang, nor was there any thundering at the panels of the door. Nobody had heard, thanks partly to the solid walls, closed windows, and drawn blinds, but chiefly to the taxi-cab thudding in the gutter, according to orders. Once more the arch-criminal had cause to congratulate himself on his prevision.

He waited till he saw the girl fall back against her stool, her face pallid, her delicate head drooping. Then he opened the street door, carried the two bags across the pavement, and deposited them in the cab.



"'PUT UP YOUR HANDS!' HE ORDERED, SHARPLY. SHE KEPT HER NERVE. HER LEFT HAND WENT UP, EMPTY; BUT HER RIGHT HELD THE SERVICE REVOLVER—POINTED AT THE ROBBER."

A policeman came strolling along the pavement. Had he heard anything? Would he twig the game?

Triplow took the bull by the horns.

"Will you stand by for a minute, mate?" he said. "There's a lot o' stuff there. Boss'll be out presently."

"A little bit o' that would do me all right," said the constable, facetiously.

"You're too late, mate," Triplow responded, in the same vein. "Why didn't you ask me last Boxing Day? I was giving it away then."

While the attention of the policeman was thus genially engaged, Tom, with his pistol still pointed at the half-fainting girl, walked backwards to the door; he was taking no more risks. Before he went out he slipped the pistol into his pocket and straightened his hat. As he did so his ear detected some new sound in the rear of the quiet office. He snapped the door and walked briskly to the cab.

"Thanks, officer," said the nimble-witted rascal masquerading as a trusted banker's clerk. He dropped a shilling into the policeman's ready palm. "Good night."

Triplow was already in the cab and Tom stepped in after him. The driver was watching with the tail of his eye; his hand went to the lever.

Ralph Warrender, emerging from nothingness, found himself in his dug-out in the region of the Somme. He was weary; excessively, disastrously weary; so weary that he could move neither hand nor foot, nor scarcely think. That shot he had heard—the shot that must have woke him—was it an attack? He forgot, but he knew what he had to do, because—he had done it all once before; yes, it was when he got his decoration. He must get out to his men! There were weights on his eyes; they would not open. But he must move, that was quite certain, and he ought to move *now*. . . . Gertrude was out there, too, waiting for him. . . . Yes, he was an officer, he must be with his men; it was his duty.

When he got that word he felt better, more confident; he clung to it. Duty! How heavy his limbs were, how his head ached! Duty! Then what was he waiting for? His course was quite clear; there was nothing else in the world that he need consider. Duty!

He wrenched open his eyelids. Curious light in the dug-out—and his pal still asleep! But, of course, it was not the dug-out; it was the strong-room, and that must be the manager. But why was—— ?

He was awake now, and his eyes sought the cash safe. It was open and empty. His mind was clearing: the shelf, of course! It was bare.

He got up and staggered to the staircase with numbed legs. He forced his feet to lift, while his brain scrabbled at the mists of uncertainty. What had happened? Where was Gertrude, and was she safe, or—— ? His thoughts were agony.

At last he reached the top. Thank goodness it was level walking now. Across the office he heard the street door close. Otherwise all was silence. The lights burned uselessly.

Another step, and the counter came into view, and there—thank Heaven!

"Gertrude!"

Gertrude, sinking into the depths, faintly heard his cry, and her spirit harked back to him. He was at her side now.

"Gertrude! You're hurt!" He was all vivid.

By a noble effort she rallied her waning forces to a semblance of vigour.

"It's nothing. Quick, they've only just gone!" Then, mindful of his safety, she pointed at the revolver. "Be careful, one's got a pistol. Take that. It's loaded—one hole. The other one went off. I'll wait here for you." And she put her hand on his arm and feebly pushed him away.

Her touch thrilled him. He grabbed the revolver and hastened to the door. His strength came rapidly back: her voice was like a draught of wine. The fighting spirit blazed up in him. He was curiously conscious that he was now himself—and had not been.

The policeman, gratified by his shilling, was civilly shutting the cab door; the windows were up. Nip had seen to that.

"Good night, sir," he said to Tom. "What, 'urt yourself, sir?" He had caught sight of a trickle of blood down the side of Tom's face.

Tom had not the least idea that he was bleeding, but, guided by the constable's gaze, he put up his hand and felt the stickiness on his cheek. He improvised readily.

"Yes, cut myself shaving," he said, carelessly. "Beastly mess, isn't it?"

To put it vulgarly, there were no spots on Constable Reed. His eye travelled upwards. "But you didn't make that round 'ole in yer 'at shaving," he commented, pointedly.

As he spoke the door of the bank opened with a slam, and the constable, glancing behind him, saw Ralph appear with the revolver in his hand.

"'Ere," he said, briskly, pulling the cab door open again, "Wot's the game? Funny time o' night, ain't it, to be shiftin' oof? 'Old up, cabby!"

For the driver had spun round in his seat, grabbed the lever, and wrenched at his steering wheel. The cab began to move towards the middle of the road.

Police-constable Reed, not to be shaken off so easily, sprang on to the step. His nose came into contact with the muzzle of Tom's pistol. Involuntarily he drew back, just as Triplow, reaching in front of Tom, struck the constable a powerful blow in the pit of the stomach.

The big policeman, losing his hold and his balance, fell over backwards and went down sprawling in the roadway.

Perhaps it was a blessing, however much disguised. For, as he fell, Ralph Warrender, standing on the bank doorstep, brought up his revolver and fired. His hand was steady, but his eyes were orbs of fury. Was his judgment under control, as his muscles were? Perhaps not, for he was seething with vengeance for the injury done to Gertrude; his brain still ached from Triplow's blow; and he was fresh from a sphere where the ethics of killing did not concern him.

It was a fine shot and a lucky one, for the bullet passed through the open doorway of the cab, smashed the front window, and struck the driver. Nip's head dropped forward. The cab, gathering way, reached the top of the camber and then, instead of turning into its proper line of traffic, careered across the road and charged the rear wheel of a brewer's dray.

A torrent of husky profanity poured down from the box of the dray. The purple-faced drayman, swathed enormously in boxcloth coat and comforter, and strapped fast in his seat, had enough to do to hold in his plunging team, without looking round to see what had happened. Nevertheless, he cursed on richly and steadily, without undue repetition or trace of fatigue. His vocabulary was amazing.

Presently, however, finding his verbal efforts unsuccessful in removing the obstruction to his wheels, he succeeded by a series of spasmodic movements in twisting his head round until he could look behind him. When he saw the chauffeur humped, uncouth and gruesome, over the steering wheel, he broke off in the middle of an expression, unhooked himself, and, descending with amazing agility, ran to take a hand in the sport the gods had sent him.

No sooner had the cab struck than Tom snatched up a bag and was out on the road in a jiffy, ready to run. Triplow was in the act of following—his own side was jammed against the dray—when Constable Reed, savage from his fall, charged up and threw himself on Tom, grabbing his pistol and driving him backwards on Triplow. Tom lost his footing and fell against the step. Triplow reeled under the impact, but instantly recovered himself and came again, demoniac with energy, cold fury in his face.

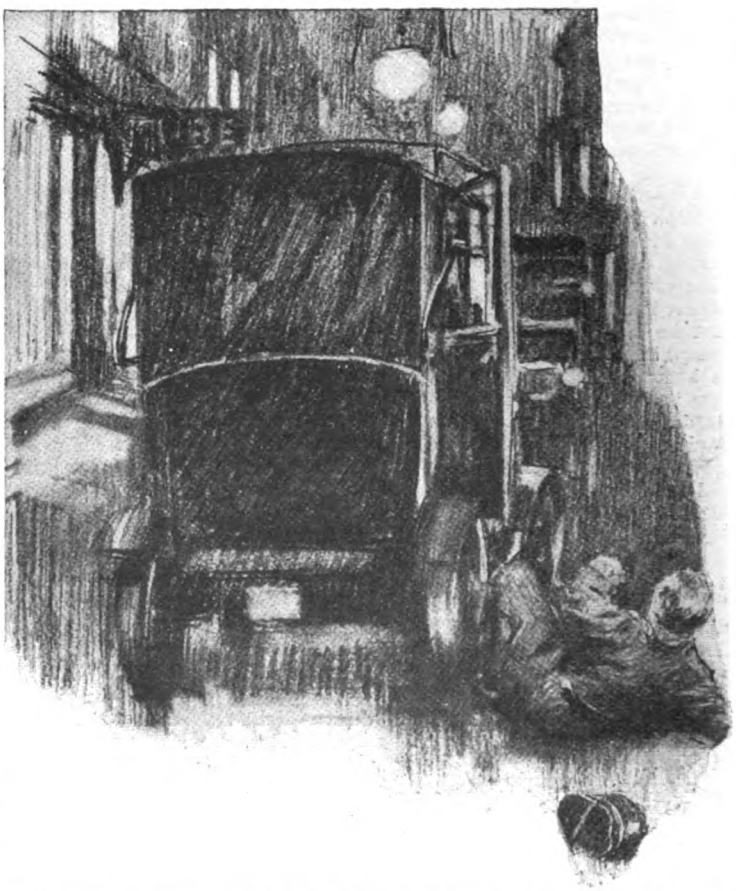
Avoiding his pal, he sprang like a tiger at the policeman. Reed was no coward and did not flinch, but he was not quick enough for this demon. He lunged at Triplow's jaw, but Triplow dodged the blow in mid-air, darted one hand at Reed's throat, clapped the other over his face, and, with the advantage in weight which his descent from the cab gave him, bore the constable backwards. Reed went down again. Triplow left him lying and darted off like a streak. Tom was unavoidably prevented from following; the drayman was sitting on him.

Warrender dared not leave the bank unguarded. Not without joy he surveyed the quick drama of confusion and violence from the vantage point of the doorstep. When Triplow broke away he raised his revolver again, then remembered it was empty, changed his hold from butt to barrel, and hurled it at the thief.

Triplow seemed to have eyes all round his head; he saw it coming, craned forward, and saved his skull. Never slackening his pace, he dashed into the ill-lighted court and was no more seen.

A City populace has a vulture instinct for a row. Running because they saw others run, people were gathering miraculously from all directions, eager for a front seat at whatever show was going. Along with them came sundry constables.

Ralph signalled to one of these, left him at the bank door, and pushed into the crowd. He found an inspector already in charge and the situation well in hand—Tom satisfactorily handcuffed, the money-bags under guard, the unconscious driver laid out on the ground. A constable was just diving off for a stretcher; another was in colloquy with the purple drayman, laboriously committing to his notebook an expurgated version of that worthy's observations.



"AS THE POLICEMAN FELL, RALPH WARRENDER, STANDING ON THE BANK DOORSTEP, BROUGHT UP HIS REVOLVER AND FIRED. IT WAS A FINE SHOT AND A LUCKY ONE, FOR THE BULLET PASSED THROUGH THE DOORWAY OF THE CAB AND STRUCK THE DRIVER."

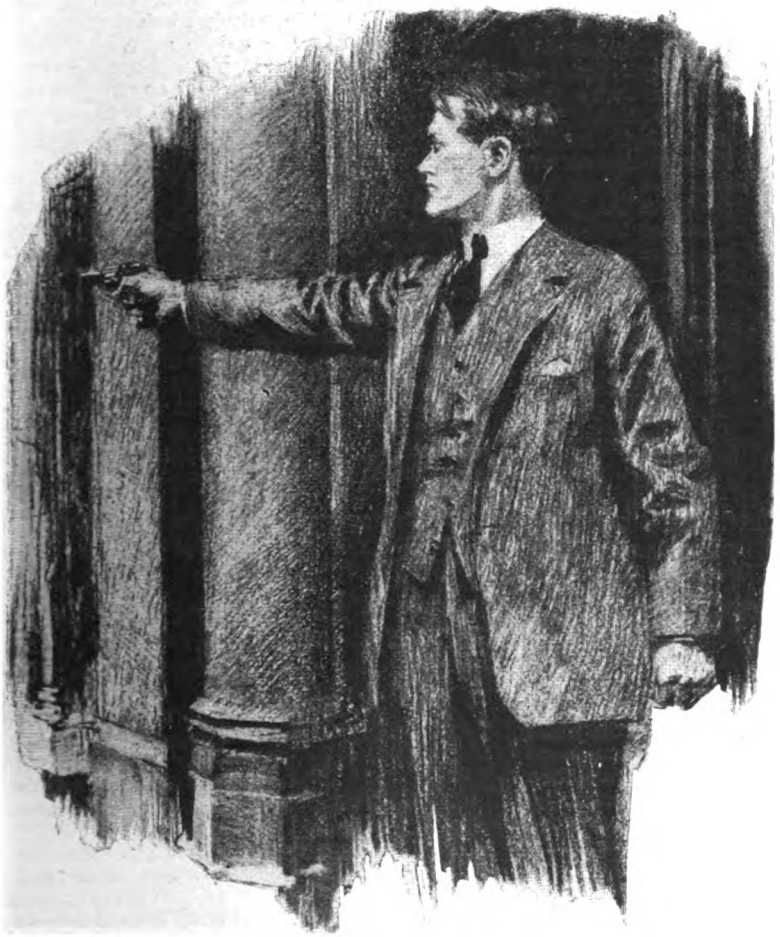
After a few words with the inspector, Ralph wormed his way out of the crowd and hurried back to the bank. He was oppressed with anxiety.

"I'll shut the door, constable," he said. "Ring the bell when you want me."

Through the glass panel of the inner swing door his eye sought the spot where he had left her. She was not there. He burst into the office. Save for the callous ticking of the clock, it was silent as the grave, and to all appearance as empty of life.

"Gertrude! Gertrude, dear!" He spoke involuntarily, and the whimper in his voice was like a sting to him. With set teeth, though tears were in his eyes, he ran to the wicket, slammed through it.

Stretched on the floor behind the counter lay the lady cashier. So white, so still!—she who this very morning was quick and bright as life itself. Her coronet of nut-brown hair was in the dust.



The sleeve of her jumper was clinging wet. Ralph dropped on his knees, cut the wrist with his penknife—then rent the dainty stuff up to the armpit. Near the shoulder was a tiny wound mark, and below and around it the glistening silk of her skin was smeared with a grisly slime of blood. He pulled out his handkerchief and began to fold it into a bandage, then flung it aside, jumped up, and began rummaging in his drawer.

"Thank God!" he cried, and was down on his knees again beside her. This time he held in his hand a little yellow package, stained and dirty; it was a first field dressing, relic of other days. He ripped it open, smashed the iodine ampoule, and gently dabbed the good brown stuff on the wound. Then he laid on the pad and bound her arm with hands that trembled—so round and soft and beautiful it was!

He was fastening the safety-pin when a movement caught his eye. Glancing up at her face, he saw that her eyes were open and that she was looking at him. He was glad, gladder than he had ever been in all his life.

For one moment her eyes twinkled like far-distant stars. Her voice came faint and slow.

"How dare you call me Gertrude!" she whispered, and the tired lids dropped again. But the smile stayed flickering and, as he watched, a tiny tear-drop came shining through the brown lashes, and he was glad—oh, glad!

He covered her up with his jacket, went to the telephone, and rang up the bank doctor. He made his message very urgent. In the act of hanging up the receiver he suddenly put it to his ear again.

"Are you there?" he called. "Oh! I forgot to say they knocked out the manager too. What? Oh, I hope not! Yes. I'll see to him at once. He's lying on the strong-room floor."

"HOW I KEEP FIT."

By the CHAMPIONS OF LEADING SPORTS.

JIMMY WILDE.

Flyweight Champion of the World.

MRS. WILDE is responsible, in a large measure, for keeping me fit, for she knows exactly how to feed me. She has studied my requirements so closely that nothing escapes her notice that might add to my comfort and well-being. I am not a food faddist. Plain, wholesome food suits me best, and plenty of it. I am not much to look at, but have a fondness for the knife and fork.

Outdoor life and plenty of golf. That is my secret of keeping fit. I always train at Tylorstown, and find the air of the Welsh mountains very beneficial. Weather permitting, I start the day with a couple of rounds on the local links, owned by the Mid-Rhondda Golf Club. It is an eighteen-hole course, and by the time I have covered it twice I feel quite ready for a square feed. After a rest I go to the gymnasium, where I put in some real hard work—skipping, ball-punching, and shadow-boxing—before I take on my sparring partners. A series of strenuous bouts is followed by massage, the operator working me for about an hour, at the end of which I feel capable of going through the whole performance again. Then I have some more recreation, on the principle that all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. Two hundred up on the billiard table makes me fit and ready for bed, and I often feel that I could sleep the clock round.

PETER LATHAM.

Professional Tennis Champion, who is fifty-four years of age.

THE secret of keeping fit is not to overtrain. I do not believe in the special training processes which get one out of the normal stride and force an artificial condition for a given occasion. I have always made it a practice to do myself well, as it were—that is, feed well in conjunction with regular exercise.

On the days of my big matches I have a good meal about eleven o'clock in the morning, as it is not good to eat heavily just before playing. I find raw meat a fine aid to stamina. Half a pound of raw minced steak, without any fat or gristle, some Worcester sauce, two new-laid eggs, with a roll, form my repast, and it is not overdoing it, as I am always ready for another good meal after play.

I have not denied myself smoking and the other good things of life. If one keeps in regular exercise at the game one enjoys, not indulging in it when too tired, it is all-sufficient. Then there will be no need for long walks, which so many people consider essential to keeping in good health.

My favourite occupation on a holiday is fishing. It is restful for both mind and body. Another great asset to the middle-aged man's health is not to worry too much about himself. I frequently suffer from sleeplessness and have lain awake all night. I just take it philosophically, read a book, and I get up next day as fit as a fiddle.

The best way to enjoy enduring fitness is to work well, play well, feed well, and don't let things worry you.

ERNEST BARRY.

England's Champion Sculler.

THE would-be sculling champion must keep fit if he is to do any good. Personally, I find that a two-miles run before breakfast, followed by a good, stiff rub-down, is about the best start to a day. After breakfast I have a good hour on the river, paced by a double-sculler. Then another rub-down and breathing exercises. In the afternoon I have another turn on the river, and that about finishes the day. In the early stages of training I indulge in some wrestling and boxing, but I have to stop that afterwards, as a sprain would be fatal to me.

ALFRED SHRUBB.

World's Champion Runner.

I HAVE never trained but in the one fashion, and that is to rise at about seven-thirty a.m., and, after going through about ten minutes' free exercise, to dress quickly and get out of doors for a brisk two-mile walk before breakfast,

going at about four and a half miles an hour. All walks should be done at this pace.

I have generally made a point of getting up at half-past seven, as I usually go to bed about ten-thirty p.m. I believe in having at least nine hours' sleep. I would put the minimum period of rest necessary as being from eight and a half to nine hours, and would advise all to govern their waking and sleeping hours by this rule.

The preliminary exercise should be as free as possible. An exerciser or chest expander might be employed if desired, though I would suggest that preference be given to Indian clubs, light dumb-bells, or absolutely free movements.

A fairly substantial breakfast of eggs, a little fish, dry toast, and coffee in preference to tea, might be followed by a four or five mile spin on the track, which distance should be increased to eight miles once or twice a week.

Lunch at about one o'clock. This should be fairly substantial. A steak, or plain roast or boiled beef or mutton, fruit, milk puddings, and a sufficiency of green vegetables. No potatoes. Stale bread or, preferably, dry toast. One glass of old ale will be found about the best thing to drink, or, if an absolute teetotaller, a cup of Bovril or coffee.

Then, about three o'clock, my method is to go back to the track and put in the afternoon work, which consists of three-mile runs for the first week, eight or ten miles during the second, and two-mile bursts for the third.

It is most important to observe regular hours throughout. Meals should be taken at the same time every day, and the times for going to bed and rising should also be strictly the same.

Rest on Sundays altogether. You will certainly feel strongly inclined for the lazy-off and will certainly not suffer thereby.

This training, it may be objected, is no doubt admirable for the man with plenty of leisure, but not for one who has to attend an office or other place of business. Well, obviously, the latter can't possibly adhere strictly to it; but, nevertheless, it should not be impossible for him to approximate thereto as nearly as he can. For instance, he can take his early morning walk, and after breakfast can walk sharply to business (or some part of the way). His meals should also be regular. Let him get down to the track about six p.m., or as near thereto as he can manage, and put in a good run every night, and he will soon find a difference in his health and stamina.

I have generally contrived to keep myself pretty fit during the summer by sticking to cricket. The tip-and-run variety of the game is good fun and good practice, while the more serious side is not devoid of use.

The only two outdoor sports which I would condemn for athletes are cycling and swimming. Swimming is wonderfully healthy, I know, and is an excellent method of developing the chest and lungs, but it nevertheless does make a man slow, since it stiffens his leg muscles.

Cycling, however, is about the worst form of exercise for a running man. The muscles developed thereby are positively inimical to running. They grow fixed and hard, and hamper all quick movements terribly. Besides which a runner wants a long, steady stride, not a series of little steps such as cycling encourages.

RICHARD ARNST.

World's Champion Sculler.

To my mind the best and easiest means of keeping fit is to become a cyclist and boxer. Perhaps I am prejudiced in favour of cycling, because I used to do a great deal of cycle racing. Undoubtedly it helped me largely to win the rowing championship of the world. I believe in plenty of any exercise which suits you, however. Don't overdo it, whether it is boxing, cricket, football, tennis, swimming, or golf. Study your constitution and work accordingly. Boxing is a splendid exercise for keeping fit, for it develops practically the whole of the body.

With regard to food—well, what suits me won't suit you, perhaps. Moderation is the keynote in ordinary times, but when in training I am very strict with myself.

As a rule I am up before six o'clock in the morning, and after tea and dry toast go for a five-mile walk. I keep up the pace and climb a stiff hill, if possible.

Breakfast consists of underdone steak, and more dry toast and tea. There is then an hour's rest before I do three or four miles sculling with an occasional sprint with my trainer.

Rest and recreation, with perhaps another hour or so on the river, complete the day. An athlete is, or should be, always fit. In my own case my greatest worry is to keep my weight down. Cycling and boxing are the best helps.

JABEZ WOLFFE.

Champion Swimmer.

WHILE athletes in every other pastime devote their main attention to getting rid of superfluous weight, a swimmer's chief fear is that he will denude himself of too much of his valuable bone covering.

Muscle, wind, and stamina are best built up by hard and regular exercise, and by a strict and well-regulated diet. This method of training, however, will consume the bulk of one's tissue, the very substance that keeps one high in the

water, and which also protects the swimmer during long immersions.

Realizing, at a very early stage in my career, the necessity of a form of exercise which would develop my muscles and generally wind me up to the "pink" of perfection, from the point of view of "condition" as required by a swimmer, I devised a system of exercises with a pair of special "grips," which has since become known as the "Jappy" Grip Exerciser.

Regular "Jappy" Grip Exercise, together with a fair amount of walking, comprises the whole of my training; that is, of course, apart from swimming exercise.

Diet is by no means so important a feature with swimmers as it is with other athletes. Personally I have been a lifelong teetotaller, and would advise all swimmers to studiously avoid any excess of intoxicating liquors. Some swimmers do, I know, believe pretty firmly in old ale, port wine, sherry and eggs, etc., but personally I believe it better to go without. Spirits certainly should be strictly barred. I must plead guilty to indulgence in an occasional cigarette, but the swimmer would be well advised to do without smoking altogether. It impairs his wind, which is his chief asset.

Then I eat very little of either meat or vegetables; but this may be a peculiarity of mine. Eggs, fish, milk puddings, chicken, biscuits, Oxo, etc., provide me with the best nutriment; but I would not suggest that it would suit everybody to follow my principles.

Pastry and potatoes are, however, best left alone, and a man who confines himself to honest roast and boiled and plenty of green stuff won't go far wrong.

THOMAS WILLIAM BURGESS.
Who swam the Channel in September, 1911.

To the fact that I am a non-smoker and teetotaller, I attribute most of my powers of endurance. I don't say that it is wrong for an athlete to drink or smoke; but they don't suit me, that's all. Work and good natural habits are, in my opinion, the best means of keeping fit. I trained very little for the Channel swim, spending practically all my time in my india-rubber business, working from six-thirty in the morning till seven at night. One can keep quite fit by hard work.

I am a big eater, and do not stint myself of anything I fancy. Every man, however, in this respect is a law unto himself. Find out what suits you and eat it. It is just a matter of common sense. After my Channel swim I ate four plates of cold lamb, vegetables, and half a fruit tart. It might have caused many men indigestion. But the meal was pleasingly satisfying to me. I do not make a habit of such big meals, but I weighed at that time fifteen stone and measured forty-nine inches round the chest—a bulk that required good feeding. And because I know what food suits it best, avoid excesses, and have carefully thought out my requirements, I require no special method of keeping fit.

GEORGES CARPENTIER.
Heavy-weight Champion of Europe.

THERE seems to exist to-day among trainers just a stereotyped style of training boxers, irrespective of the physical requirements of these. I naturally developed many weak points in my composition as my body matured, but all these have been strengthened and put in order. For years I suffered from soft hands, but by careful treatment these have now become as sound as hammers. The reducing or putting weight on boxers is generally understood to-day, but even these processes must be carried out on scientific principles, otherwise the increase of one tissue may mean the decrease of others of a more vital character, and *vice versâ*. The necessary amount of physical labour, too, should be gauged to a nicety, for over-working means "staleness" and lassitude.

When doctors prescribe, they take into consideration the necessities of the case, according to the patient's constitution. Thus it should be with a trainer. Instead of that, any old-fashioned routine is considered good enough in some cases, the result being often the spoiling of a boxer. Good training has often won contests, admitting that all other things are equal.

Personally, I believe in cheerful rural surroundings, with plenty of good food. Some of the principal assets for a boxer in training are: a contented mind, bright companions, well-chosen sparring partners, concentration of mind on one's work, earnestness, and faith in the trainer. I have found it hurtful to work too hard while training. That is to say, instead of feeling tired out at the end of a day's work, one should, on the contrary, experience a sense of passive contentment, conducive to a good night's sleep. The boxer who overworks himself spends restless nights, and these play havoc with the nervous system. The very best of tonics is balmy, restful slumber.

In fact, the golden rule should be that excess in anything, whether it be work, amusement,

eating, drinking, or sleeping, is bad. Moderation in all things should be the boxer's motto. Personally, I am fond of a cigar, and invariably indulge up till within ten days of a contest for which I am training. Then everything of a lowering order is banished, and I place myself completely and unconditionally in the hands of my trainer-manager, Descamps.

There is a far too great tendency in most boxers to believe that the more work they do the better their chances of victory. What really leads to success is just enough physical work, with plenty of brain activity. The man who just goes through his training routine mechanically, that is to say, just because he has to, does not derive the full benefit of his work. It is the thoughtful, scrupulous boxer who succeeds.

HARRY VARDON.

Present Open Golf Champion, and six times holder of the title.

THERE is no golden rule for keeping fit. What suits one person might be quite harmful to another. I have no strict rules in regard to myself. I am not a teetotaller, just a moderate drinker, but I am a very heavy smoker. I feel no ill-effects of either at any time, however. But I am generally in bed at ten o'clock, and to this "early to bed" rule I attribute not a little of my good health.

C. E. LARNER.

World's Amateur Walking Champion.

WALKING itself has been fairly generally recognized as the most healthful of all forms of exercise, while the unequalled benefits to be derived from it are tacitly admitted by its adoption as the most important item of every athlete's preparation.

Running men, boxers, swimmers, cyclists, wrestlers, etc.—one and all of them indulge in daily walks, preferably across country, or along the roads. All these walks, too, are conducted at a fair pace, so that I am disposed to fancy that were sufficient opportunities afforded for eight, ten, twelve, or twenty mile road or cross-country walking contests, the list of entrants would more than satisfy the promoters.

There is, as far as I am aware, only one satisfactory method of training for any kind of walking contest, and that is by walking. I once had an idea that swimming might do me a bit of good, and so went in regularly for it. I thought that a daily dip in the sea could not fail to bring me on, but I found that I went back in pace and my health suffered. So I gave it up.

Neither do I find cold baths agree with me. I used to go in for them, since I found that the majority of athletes did so, but I have never found them to agree with my constitution. Perhaps I am peculiar in this respect, so would not like to advise others to avoid either swimming or cold bathing, if they find them suitable.

I have always been fond of a set-to with the gloves from boyhood. My father taught all his sons to box, and I have never lost my early liking for the sport.

Cross-country running is another form of athletics of which I am rather fond, although, through fear of its interfering with my walking, I did not indulge in it too much.

The training routine to which I confine myself is pretty much as follows. I commence road work in January, going for a ten-mile fast tramp every other day, alternating with an easy seven or eight miles. I keep these up right through January and until the middle of February, when I get on the track and lay myself out trying to keep to, or, if possible, to cut my various records over the different distances.

MRS. LAMBERT CHAMBERS.

England's Lady Lawn Tennis Champion.

I CAN think of no better way of keeping fit than by playing lawn tennis. It has been suggested that the game impairs the health, unduly taxes the strength of women, deprives them of feminine charm, and mars their beauty. So far from these accusations being true, I think that lawn tennis in moderation imparts radiant health—not an unimportant factor in beauty.

Lawn tennis, to my mind, is an ideal tonic for body and mind. That is why I recommend it as a pastime for women. It is a game not difficult to learn, is inexpensive, and even a rudimentary idea enables anyone to enjoy a good deal of healthy exercise. Furthermore, it is the only athletic pastime in which women can combine with and compete against men without in any way spoiling the game. I am convinced that lawn tennis has been a help and not a handicap to me in my working-day life.

I never train especially for an important match, as I am lucky enough to have excellent health, although my appearance doesn't suggest it; but one thing I cannot do without is plenty of sleep in a well-ventilated room. I always

find a bad night means bad play the next day.

Little but good plain food is what I eat before a match, such as steak and milky rice pudding.

J. H. TAYLOR.
Five times Open Golf Champion.

I HAVE no rules for keeping fit. My life in the open air, good, simple food, and abstemious living I find quite sufficient to keep me in the bodily and mental state that enables me to cope with my continuous and exhausting work of giving tuition and playing matches with a certain degree of success. In my experience of twenty-five years as golf professional I have never had occasion to endeavour to improve on the above, which is simple, inexpensive, and within the reach of all.

MISS JULIA F. M. JOHNSTONE.
Lady Amateur Foil Champion of England, 1910.

I HAVE sometimes been asked whether fencing is not too fatiguing an exercise for ladies. I say emphatically "No," if wisely indulged in. Indeed there is no exercise which can be more judiciously regulated to suit the physical requirements of a woman. It will be her own fault if she finds herself in any way overexhausted, and when in training it is astonishing how much can be undertaken.

To me it is always a little depressing when the fencing season is over. Very regretfully do I put aside my foil in the summer, for though very fond of lawn tennis and swimming, I find that, from a health point of view, there is no exercise to compare with fencing.

Headaches, depression, colds—all complaints seem to fly before the magic of the foil. If you fence earnestly and with a strong opponent, it is very hard work, and complete change and bath is, or should be, the unfailing accompaniment. No doubt this factor makes for that sense of special fitness and well-being which one experiences after visiting the fencing school.

I have never found it necessary to observe any special rules of diet or exercise. Daily walks in the fresh air, meat once a day only, and plenty of fruit are, I think, the "keynotes" to keeping fit.

JAMES BRAID.
Five times holder of the Open Golf Championship.

I DON'T undertake any special training, as I consider my ordinary duties quite sufficient to keep me in condition. Prior to championship or other matches, I always endeavour to keep as near as possible to my usual routine in regard to dieting, etc.

J. B. HOBBS.
The Great Surrey Batsman.

DURING the season the game itself keeps me fit. It is more strenuous than many people suppose, and a man who is in the field almost every day throughout the season needs little else. When the weather is bad we indulge in ping-pong in the dressing-room at the Oval. It calls for a good deal of nimbleness if keenly played, and is very excellent training for hand and eye.

I have no fads or fancies, and as I am one of the lean kind I can eat anything I please. I am not a teetotaller, but certainly I am a very moderate drinker. My one "vice" is tobacco, and I generally have a pipe between my lips when I am not playing. It does not seem to have any ill-effect.

Out of season I believe in plenty of walking, and the addition of a bag of golf clubs makes it all the more enjoyable. Some people say that golf spoils cricket, and *vice versâ*. My golf, at present, has not reached the stage where it is capable of being spoiled.

There are players who find it difficult to get fit at the commencement of the season. When I begin to put on flesh I suppose I, too, shall have to indulge in long spells of skipping and other irksome exercises. At present I have no special method of preparation beyond net practice. A cricketer does not need to train in the same way as a footballer or a runner. His season is long and arduous, and it is just as well for him to be a bit above himself, as they say in racing parlance, at the commencement. If he were too finely trained at the beginning of May he would probably crack up or go stale long before the end of the season.

Moderation in all things and early hours are golden rules for those who would keep their form on the cricket field.

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Do not miss this most Romantic & Thrilling Story

The HAPPY HUSBAND

By Ernest Goodwin

ILLUSTRATED BY
SYDNEY SEYMOUR LUCAS

PART II.

Adelesa, the young wife of an old husband, is deeply in love with Angioletto, a young man of her own age, who is also in love with her. He climbs one evening into her room, where they are nearly surprised by the husband, Domenico, who is about to depart for a journey. Angioletto just has time to conceal himself in the wardrobe. On her husband's departure Angioletto emerges from the wardrobe and Adelesa asks him to say good-bye for ever. Then from the window they observe figures in the garden and imagine they are watched. "I must hide you," she says, desperately, thinking her husband has returned. "He'll search till he finds you. I have it—put on a gown. Be a girl—a neighbour's wife!" No sooner is the transformation effected than the door opens. Adelesa stares, shrinks a little towards Angioletto, and faces the door. The incidents now become most thrilling.

TWO men, entirely strange to her, were entering the room.

Ceccolino del Ponte, first Duke of Brescia, had but one son, Alessandro.

Alessandro was now a man of forty, and since his father had been seated in the chair, now ducal, of Brescian rule, he had exploited to the full, in the indulgence of his tastes, the powers and privileges attaching to his birth and station. It took no long time for a new-comer to Brescia to gather what shape those tastes assumed. He patronized the arts; painting, sculpture, literature, music, all these with taste and skill he took under his protection. But the employment of all other which most engaged his distinguished leisure was the chase of women. He was of the race of wretches cursed with a craving for the pursuit of that happiness of all joys most futile, leading its devotees down paths ending in inevitable quagmire, over which like a will-o'-the-wisp the phantasmagoric illusion hovers eternally, eternally allures.

Sick at heart of his pastime, yet still avid, he bore an aspect that proclaimed him for what he was. Tall, slender, not inelegant, thin-bearded, with hair carefully drawn over his cranium to conceal his growing baldness, his every feature contributed to evoke a sense of repulsion. In that face indulgence, insatiable and pitiless, had her seat. But he was the Duke's son, and the next duke. He had brains, a certain power of mind, and an unswerving purpose that bore him along almost without serious hindrance. In any new fancy he reckoned triumph a foregone conclusion, and, as Domenico had told Adelesa, the women of Brescia had done their best to confirm his confidence. And not only the women. The complaisant brother or father, nay, even the complaisant husband, was no rarity in Brescia.

Consider him then, a duke's son, with the tale of his triumphs in his estimation nowhere near its completion yet. And Ugolino, that swift hunter, his aid, counsellor, scout, pointer in every venture, has brought him word of fresh game. A rare thing—not yet twenty, unskilled in the ways of the world, of most moving beauty, and—let us laugh!—wedded to a husband of established years. Clearly we may take a ducal interest here. And now to the appetite just whetted comes a fresh fillip—her husband is leaving her for a time. Ugolino has been scouting diligently in his own accomplished fashion. He has the news and will guarantee its accuracy. This Domenico, poor deluded man, is leaving his wife unguarded for three days. He is off to Fiesole on some business or other. To-night he starts. To add to the piquancy of the situation there is no doubt the good man has lately taken alarm.

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When first he brought this wife of his to Brescia he had taken her out and about in the society of the town; had been entertained, had entertained in his turn. Lately, beyond all questioning, he had kept her close. The house had become a prison. Its walls and windows were now a cell in which this charming captive like some caged bird fluttered her wings, not a doubt of it, in passionate protest. To-night then, my lord? Why not; my lord admits himself intrigued, ponders a little, and languidly assents.

So, within an hour of midnight, behold our little party of pleasure on the move. Ugolino has provided, like the careful servant he is, a proper escort for the Ducal safety. The husband has been watched out of the house. He has been seen to mount and ride towards the city gates, and with no delay eight men, reliable men, used to such duties, have taken up unobtrusive station, some in the street, some in the garden. Two of them accompany Ugolino to the house door, one waits with Alessandro, respectfully on guard till a whisper from the door shall hail his Excellency.

All goes well. Entrance is soon obtained, the terrified servants bidden hold their peace and remain where Ugolino disposes them till they have his permission to move, and now—be pleased to enter my lord, and let's upstairs.

Ugolino, short, stout, powerful, gratified sharer in this one at least of his master's widely diversified interests, though of a blunter mood in action, enters first, stands aside, holds the door wide, and Alessandro steps in.

Adelesa had risen, Angioletto had risen. Both by two phases of the same instinct, hers for protection, his to yield it, had shrunk together. The light of the lamp shone on the two almost in each other's arms.

All the artist in Alessandro stirred as he looked at the group of two before him, the foremost a fair girl, tall, hair thick-braided, face beauteous in the flush of surprise, a supreme grace of limb suggested in the pull of the folds of her rich blue dress. Behind her, a most admirable foil stood in her shadow, black-haired, creamy of skin, tall, too, in a flowing dress of crimson, flaring where the lamplight caught it, of a warm and intense darkness where the shadow of the girl in front masked it.

Surveying them, he felt a gush of pleasure in the realization of how well the group "composed," the happy excellence of its arrangement of colour, mass, light, and shade. It occurred to him that, taking a wider view, so as to include both himself and Ugolino in the composition, here was not merely a subject, but a picture, already grouped and waiting only the wording. He glowed in the enjoyment of a great idea—he would have this picture painted for him. Lamberti, his favourite painter, now busied on the decoration of the exquisite altarpiece just set in its place in the Church of Sancta Croce, must suspend for a while his labour there and devote his genius to this subject. The "Annunciation" must wait—"The Intruders" claimed immediate attention. Lamberti, he reflected, with pleasure growing deeper each moment, would appreciate and be able to translate on to his canvas the spiritual significance of the scene. So fascinating was the thought that almost reluctantly he broke it off as speech from Adelesa recalled him to the business of the moment. The entrance of two strangers where she anticipated Domenico had for the moment released her from the press of terror. Alarm she felt, but of a different texture. Here was unwarranted intrusion into the privacy of her bedroom. In the last five minutes a discovery of herself as the married woman had lent her the capacity for a present indignation. With dignity in every line, legitimate protest in her tones, she questioned them. "Sir, gentlemen, what is this?"

Ugolino closed the door and halted there. This sort of inquiry, sometimes genuinely made, sometimes a mere pretence, was the usual thing. His master was skilled to deal with either mood. Leave this to Alessandro then. The Duke's son advanced a step or two with slow dignity, a smile, confident and ingratiating, displaying his long teeth.

"Be reassured, madam. You are right to inquire the meaning of our visit, but at the outset, learn that we intend to offer only the greatest respect."

She was bewildered. "But, sirs, my husband ——"

He interrupted—"Is well away. That's certain, Ugolino?" He turned to where the brute at the door waited, impassive.

"Certain, my lord."

"So," continued Alessandro, "if our visit disturbs you, accept a thousand apologies, and my assurance that nothing on earth shall intrude on you—I may say, on us—further this night." He waited a second, till the sudden little falling apart of Adelesa's lips showed him that on her bewilderment a vague idea of his meaning was breaking. He turned to Ugolino with a wider smile, "Assure the lady, Ugolino,"

Ugolino fulfilled his part in the unfolding of the situation.

"Take my word for it, lady, the guard we have set round the house will see to that."

Adelesa, still bewildered, felt nevertheless as if a veil were being drawn aside from something too repulsive for her gaze. Something was being offered to her comprehension which her every instinct refused to accept. The blood rushed to her cheeks, then left them white. A roaring sounded in her ears. She tried to keep up her appearance of dignity, but her knees were shaking.

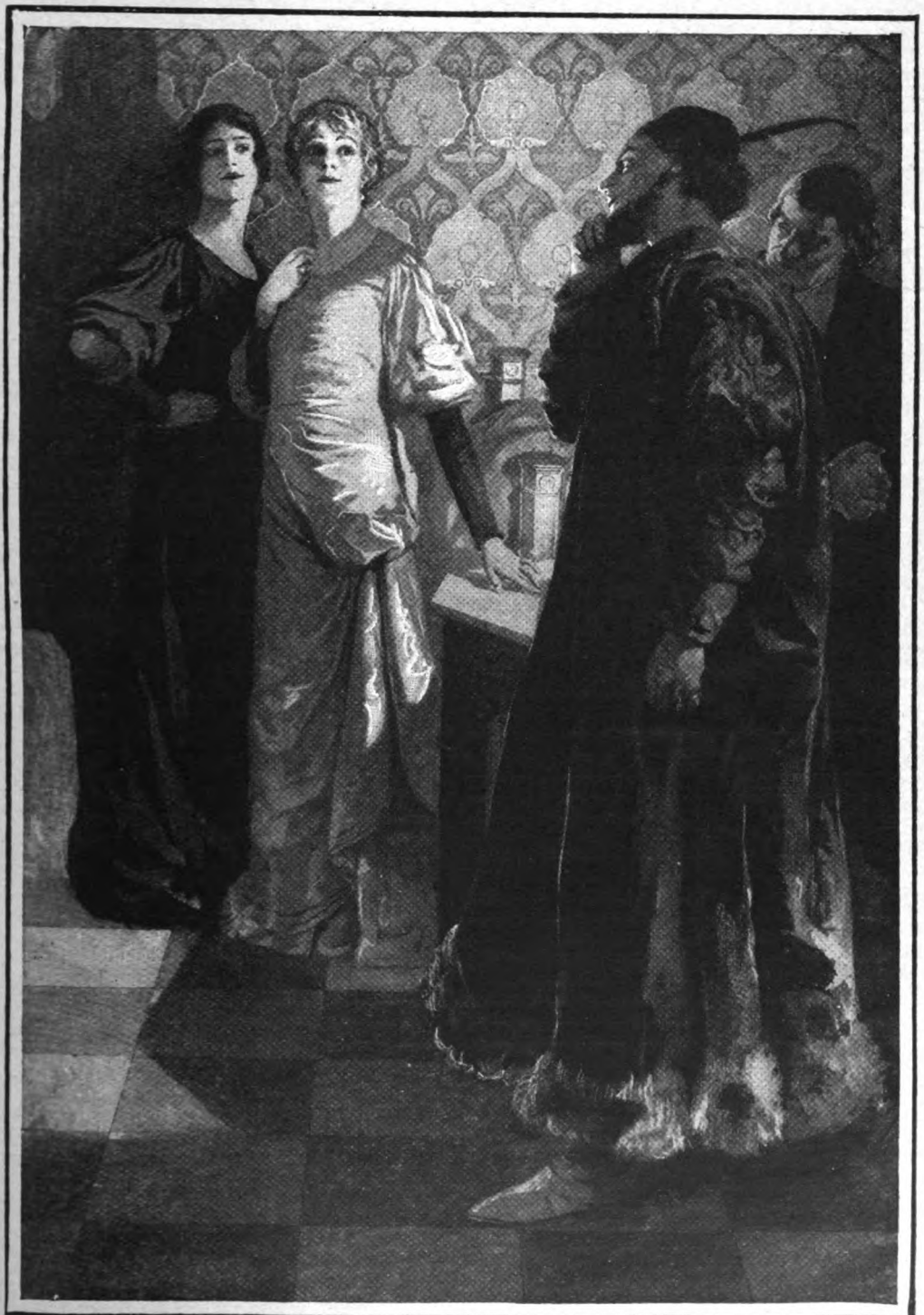
"Gentlemen," she said, with all she could muster of firmness in her tones, "what do you want?"

"Something of graciousness from you, who are a very fountain of grace."

Alessandro approached her slowly, still smiling. She went to step back, as he spoke, and found herself in contact with Angioletto, put her hand behind her—Angioletto slipped his hand into it. She thanked God for it.

"Be pleased to go," she said, boldly.

In her eyes as she faced Alessandro was a



"WITH DIGNITY IN EVERY LINE, LEGITIMATE PROTEST IN HER TONES, SHE QUESTIONED THEM. 'GENTLEMEN, WHAT IS THIS?'"

rising spirit, a pride that would not easily break. The prospect nevertheless, of breaking it, gave to Alessandro's pleasure a fresh fillip. This moment was a morsel he could turn over with his tongue, with lingering enjoyment. He gave the further unfolding of the meaning of his visit there to Ugolino, only that he might survey the scene with greater detachment.

"Ugolino, make matters clear to the lady."

Ugolino obeyed orders. He came further into the room and addressed Adelesa. "This gentleman, *ma donna*, is His Excellency, Alessandro ——"

She stared from one man to the other. "The Duke's son?" she asked.

"So my mother says," interposed Alessandro. "And my good friend Ugolino has brought me here to see for myself the beauty all Brescia speaks of, and which hides itself, or is hidden, so jealously."

Spite of her effort to avoid facing the facts of her situation, she had to make the answer that would evoke the disclosure she hated.

"Be brief—what do you want?"

Alessandro looked at Ugolino. The fellow explained.

"His Excellency wants you to bear him company, here to-night——" He ceased as she flinched visibly. Alessandro finished the sentence: "On this auspicious occasion of your husband's absence."

She felt Angioletto's hand press hers gently. Again it heartened her. She lifted her head in proud hostility. "My lord, go away. My husband will return shortly." It was not true.

A pang shot through her as she thought of Domenico, here not a quarter of an hour ago, and now, all unknowing, riding steadily away, doubt in his heart, all unconscious that in his house his wife was standing at bay in face of a peril not even he had anticipated. She saw that when Domenico spoke of Ugolino and had uttered his warning he must have had in mind the possibility of her complicity in treachery. But here was something which she knew went far beyond what her husband had contemplated. And he had left her. She felt a pang of resentment. Why had he left her? Why had he not foreseen?

Alessandro turned to Ugolino again, making inquiry, not so much to satisfy himself, but that Adelesa might read in the answer full knowledge of her helplessness.

"Her husband is away for three days, Ugolino?"

"Undoubtedly—to Fiesole, my lord."

Alessandro turned again to Adelesa, smiling, but wordless. His lifted eyebrows merely questioned, "You see?"

Her face dropped into her hands. Beneath her skirts her limbs were shaking. They could hardly bear her weight. All she could say was, "My God! Oh, my God!"

She had let go of Angioletto's hand, and now as she stood the sense of utter loneliness became a terrible thing. She looked round for him. The boy was there, not stirred from his place. It was she whose involuntary movement had placed a gap between them.

From the first moment of the entry of Alessandro and Ugolino, Angioletto had stood motionless, a pace or so behind Adelesa. As agitated as she, filled with a double sense of shame and humiliation at his situation and the device he had consented to adopt, his first impulse had been to shelter himself behind her. Possibly less desperate than she, in spite of his greater peril, he had allowed her to speak, because it seemed proper that she should dominate the situation. But as he grasped what was afoot he felt rising in him the sense of a call upon what of manhood he believed himself to possess. More rapidly even than Adelesa he had sensed the meaning of the intrusion, and swift on that came the certainty that soon or late the challenge to action would come to him.

At first the thought was a terrifying one, that set his limbs shivering, made his heart thump, his breathing furiously fast. But now, with a quiver of delight, he felt stirring in his breast a new and exhilarating sensation.

The call was coming to him. Well, it should find him responsive. He felt his heart, still labouring, beating with a generous action. He felt the muscles of his limbs tighten almost of their own accord, as if to assure him that here was strength waiting to respond to his will. What could be done he could give no guess at, but that his chance would come he made no doubt. So, retired in the shadow of Adelesa, he waited, eyeing Alessandro from behind her. Alessandro had taken little notice of him. In his dark crimson dress, his black hair cut in a fringe across his white forehead and falling to his shoulders, his delicate lips and nostrils giving no more than a touch of piquant masculinity to the smooth contour of his face, his large eyes, shining, brilliant, unblinking, long-lashed, gazing steadfastly from under his clean pencilled eyebrows, still he had been but a foil to the golden beauty of the woman Alessandro had addressed. And for this he still stood as Alessandro, well pleased at the sight of a woman's tears, broke the silence with a new note of gaiety.

"Come, we are all standing." With a sort of expansive hospitality he seated himself on the couch and flung a wave of the hand to his follower. "Ugolino, bring us wine. Bacchus, no less than Eros, is worthy—and at the same time take away this other lady, whose presence here—whose presence ——" he faltered, leant a little sideways, surveyed Angioletto. He ceased speaking, stared. His thin red eyebrows lifted a little. "Ugolino, you said nothing of this one."

Ugolino, too, stared with him. So, dropping her hands from her eyes, did Adelesa. With a singing in his ears, there came to Angioletto a great inward compelling, as of a mighty whisper, an urge forward, the framing in his senses of an overmastering call, an instinctive "Now!"

He stood a pace or so forward. The lamplight streamed unhindered over him. A whirl of sensations almost swept his self-control away, but floating on their crest, by good chance as it seemed, came a sense of the humour of the situation. Just for a second he had to smother a wild impulse to laugh. Choking this back, his face

flushed, his lips parted a little. "What perfect teeth!" reflected the ducal critic.

Ugolino, staring with Alessandro, answered his master, himself in wonderment: "Bacco, Excellency, I never saw her before."

Alessandro, always exigent, turned on him with a touch of savagery. "Yet I have left you your eyes—can I trust you to look for the wine?" Ugolino turned red and got himself out of the room, cursing inwardly. He had brought Alessandro to see a certain woman, had filled his ear with her praises, and on the introduction a second woman had appeared, with whom, plainly, Alessandro was the more interested. The credit of the evening's enjoyment had been reft from Ugolino.

Alessandro spoke to Adelesa. She, poor girl, dulled in the sense of the catastrophe hanging over her, scarcely grasped as yet the alteration in the state of affairs. Yet with what little realization she gained there came to her, as to Angioletto, a sense of frantic jest. Looking at Angioletto she for the first time saw the miraculous completeness of his disguise, the ease with which his smooth charm had assumed the feminine. She realized that to anyone not in the secret, here was a woman of magic beauty. Angioletto glanced at her, read her mind. The young devil lifted his clasped hands to his breast, as he had seen her do, dropped his lashes over his eyes, swayed over till his weight poised on one hip, one foot, knees coyly together. Adelesa felt that if he made another move she would scream.

With a grave face, eyes devouring this fresh object of interest, Alessandro rose and came to Angioletto, took his hand. Angioletto shrank shyly back. Alessandro, all in a glow, questioned Adelesa.

"A relative, madam?"

She stammered back all her swirling brain could lend her in the way of prompt answer. "My—my cousin."

Alessandro beamed. "Fresh chains, fresh chains," he murmured, reproachfully. "Oh, tyrant love, must I be scourged again?"

To Adelesa it seemed outrageous that a man should be thus in error. His look, his attitude, the timbre of his voice gave to his error an aspect so grotesque as to be repulsive.

"Sir," she said, with sudden energy, "for Heaven's sake, leave us alone. You are wrong. I cannot explain—but"—she paused, helplessly. He struck in.

"Explain no more than this—is your cousin married?"

"No, my lord," she answered.

"And her name?"

"Is—is," she stopped It was not in her power to invent at such a moment. She threw a glance of appeal to Angioletto. Angioletto felt that the centre of the play of events was swinging toward him. He must speak. Fortunately he had had a second or two, and with nothing but a rather taking nervousness he interposed.

"Maddalina, your grace."

Alessandro found the word music, the utterance musical. "Maddalina," he reflected, turning the word over lingeringly. "Maddalina, how sweet! And how old is Maddalina?"

"Eighteen," Angioletto gave him.

"A delightful age." Alessandro released the hand he held and stood back a pace to survey the excellent beauty of this adorable creature. He ignored the coming and going of Ugolino, who, after a discreet tap at the door, ventured to open and enter. He brought with him some glasses and a flask of wine, and crossing the room with an air of proper discretion, set them on the table, and again withdrew. Alessandro still gazing at Angioletto put out his hand to the flask, poured out a glass for himself, lifted it to his lips. "I drink," he said, "to love and Maddalina." He drained the wine slowly, his eyes fixed on the face before him. "You rare thing. Have you ever loved?"

The mad imp whose promptings to laughter Angioletto had with such difficulty resisted now gained the mastery. Angioletto had to laugh. His mouth opened and gave exit to a ripple of merriment, touched perhaps with something not far from hysteria. He had to clap his hands to his cheeks to control his merriment, and his spoken answer came in little jets between the spasms of his mirth.

"I thought so, Excellency, but I have been told I know nothing about it." He swept a glance at Adelesa as he spoke. She turned away in resentment at his laugh, his ease, the callous nonchalance of his stand and pose and address. In his glance, sweeping from her to Alessandro, there was an archness that to her was terrible, to Alessandro captivating.

"You must learn," said Alessandro. "I shall teach you. I am a professor in this wondrous art of love. Have you ever kissed?"

"Yes," said Angioletto. He dropped his white eyelids bashfully.

"I hate the man," said Alessandro, with energy.

"No man, my lord." Angioletto fought himself to keep his mirth somewhere in leash.

Alessandro stirred with interest. "Is that so?"

"On my faith, yes." Angioletto forced his teeth on to his lower lip and again held the laugh back. Alessandro surveyed him with appraising eyes.

"With those lips—and such eyes," he murmured to himself. "Maddalina, we shall drink together."

He turned to the table at his elbow and very delicately filled two glasses from the flask.

Up till that moment Angioletto had played his part with no more of purpose than the passing of time and the staving off of discovery. Now a miraculous prompting seemed to fling a light before him into the minutes that were to come, and showed him a glimpse of what must be. He flicked an eyelid at Adelesa. Not so much in response to the wordless call, but because her own agitation was almost unbearable she took the two steps that brought her to him. She leant her lips to his ear.

"Angioletto," she breathed, "what will you do?"

Not looking at her, his smile and his eye fixed on Alessandro busy with the wine, Angioletto slid his quiet answer back.

"Get me my knife."

As he said it, very quietly and unobtrusively he put out a hand behind him and touched hers, then relinquished it. In that second she felt spurt through her for a second time that evening a fear and a pride most strangely intermingled. Was this Angioletto, the boy whom she had rebuked not so many minutes before, with a mature superiority of wisdom? The sense of laughter was vanished now. Looking at him she saw in the line of his profile something subtly changed. In the delicate lips and nostrils power and purpose were declared. Between this slender, this girlish Angioletto, and Domenico a sensation of strange likeness revealed itself to her astonished gaze. Even in the faint whisper Domenico's voice and tones had sounded. "Get me my knife," was the order of Angioletto. Domenico had said, "My knife for the man that dare wrong me." He had told her in words that had almost moved her to tears: "I guard your honour with my sword, my life if needs be." In Angioletto's face, not all its smiling as it turned to Alessandro could hide a resolution that matched Domenico's. This boy would guard her honour, too, from such outrage as Alessandro's at any rate.

In exultation she obeyed him. She crossed over towards the wardrobe. There lay his sword and his dagger, hidden by her as she had made her hasty attempt to disguise him. Alessandro, always wary, looked up, put out a hand, detained her by the dress. She felt the insult of his touch, yet at the moment almost welcomed it. It was all to be paid for. Angioletto should have his knife.

"You are leaving us, signora?" queried Alessandro.

She played her part well. "My lord, I must get a handkerchief." Truly there were tear-stains down her flushed face, plain for Alessandro to see. He could not see the joy leaping in her breast.

"What a shame," he answered her, in mock pity, and released her. "Maddalina does not weep. You are not afraid of me, Maddalina?"

"No," came the smiling answer. Alessandro felt his heart glow at this boldness. This that looked so virginal was yet plainly meeting him in an answering mood.

"Bravo! That's the spirit for a student of love. Drink then"—he gave her one of the two shining goblets—"drink to life, to love, and the happy chance!"

With an engaging reluctance Angioletto put out a timid hand, took the goblet, held it to his lips. Over its brim his eyes, large, shining, full of a meaning that intrigued while it baffled, surveyed Alessandro.

"To the happy chance—and the courage to seize it."

He began slowly to drain the glass. Alessandro tossed off his own glass. "Courage," he answered with exuberance, "courage, and the hour, nay, the minute."

He set the glass down on the table. Back from the wardrobe came Adelesa. She had what she wanted. As she passed Alessandro she pressed a handkerchief to her eyes. In her other hand she held a second handkerchief. Reaching Angioletto, openly, without disguise, she offered a handkerchief. Angioletto with a little smile of thanks took it in his left hand. So, with the glass raised to his lips in one hand, the handkerchief in the other, drooping by his side, fingers adjusting themselves ever so delicately about the slender handle of the toylike blade the lace covered, he emptied his glass.

"The hour, the minute, the very second!"

The man sitting at the table burst out:—

"On my soul, all you say sparkles like your eyes. Did I boast myself professor in this Art of Love? As I look on you something bids me expect a lesson from my pupil."

"Oh, expect a lesson!" A rippling musical little laugh was thrown.

Alessandro sprang up. "A challenge—good! Well, teach me!"

To Adelesa at his action there came now a terrible feeling, the sense of the approach of a moment full of fate, the moving forward of something imponderable yet irresistible, the looming of a hand, gigantic, shadowy, outstretched, with fingers spread, now closing——

She gave a cry in a voice trembling with terror. Alessandro was so smiling, so confident, that his look and action seemed invested with a grotesqueness that reached the diabolic. A sudden pity, even for this man she so loathed, wakened in her. She made one last desperate effort to save him. She panted, "Oh God—Oh God! My lord, let me beg you once again, let us alone, leave this house. You speak of love and life, but think, think of hate, of death——"

Frowning, annoyed, his impatience at her remonstrance too much for his usual assumption of unruffled politeness, he struck in. "Death!" The word was offensive to him. "Enough, signora. Come," back to his sinister urbanity again, "we shall all have the dismals. We are three, which is a pestilentially unlucky number in matters of love. Pray tell me, what is through that door?"

Adelesa followed with her eyes his action as he pointed.

"My dressing-room."

"It has a window?"

"Yes."

"Then do me a favour. Go into your dressing-room, close the door, sit by the window, and tell me, by and by, how many stars you can count." He stared at her, smiled as he saw her take his meaning. "Count carefully. Miss not a single tiny star, even if it should take you—three hours." Again his eyes rested on her face, insolently impatient of her presence. "Go, madam."

She looked from him to Angioletto. The boy still stood, slender, arch, coy, smiling lips parted; he gave her one glance; in his eyes was a gleam too dreadful for her to meet.

She spoke but once more.

"I warned you." She lifted her hands as if abandoning all responsibility, as indeed she was, lifted the latch, entered her dressing closet, and shut the door.

Alessandro turned to Angioletto. Those dark eyes were turned full upon him, but the face, still beautiful, still entrancing in its smooth beauty, had changed its aspect. There was no smile. The nostrils were swelling, the lips set, the brows level and lowered, so that the eyes looked with a dark brightness out of shadows. Alessandro felt a momentary chill, which he threw off.

"How stern we are looking. She has dulled Madalina's spirits with her chatter of life and death." He took a step forward. His sureness, his sense of complete hold on the immediate future roused in Angioletto a touch of that same pity that had moved Adelesa to a last warning. Yielding to an impulse akin to hers, with outstretched hand he stayed Alessandro. "A minute, Excellency; she asked you to go—I ask you to go."

Again Alessandro felt a chill, and again threw it off in speech.

"But what of courage and the happy chance? Shall we not take it?"

No more of pity. Angioletto's fingers felt more certainly the handle of the knife lying in the handkerchief's folds. Still unsmiling, he, like Adelesa, relinquished all thought of further intervention between this man and his fate. "If your lordship insists."

He took up his part again. He dropped his eyes, turned away slightly, lifted the shoulder nearest Alessandro, as if interposing a reluctant defence, that pretty, proper, last piece of feminine fiction.

"Does your heart beat?" asked Alessandro.

Angioletto lifted his eyes to the man's face, eyes full of a meaning the Duke's son could not read.

"Like mad," he answered, calmly, "but my hand is steady."

"And mine," said Alessandro, exulting. "Mine has not stirred like this for years. Come close, Maddalina, and put your hand on my heart."

He stood a pace nearer, opened his arms.

Angioletto, one reluctant shoulder still lifted in guard, shifted behind his back the knife in its nest of lace from his left hand to his right. Alessandro, all smiles, brought his arms together round his prize, felt an arm, slipping round him in response, tighten round his shoulders, pull him forward.

A little pressure at the same moment settled lightly on his doublet—on the left breast, over his heart. . . .

In the darkness of her dressing closet Adelesa stood, rigid, eyes staring at the starry sky that showed through the curtains of the window. Her shoulders against the door, her hand on the latch, all her conscious energy concentrated into her powers of hearing, she waited.

She heard, not the words, but the muffled sound of the short colloquy between the two in the bedroom, then came a pause, and then a sound, as of a sigh, long-drawn, rising a little, then fading, fading into nothingness. Silence again; then a faint thud as of something heavy falling—no, not falling, sliding—down on to the carpet.

A voice came to her through the stifling agony of the moment, a voice she hardly recognized as Angioletto's, and a tapping on the door.

"Adelesa, Adelesa!" cried the voice. "Come here!"

Faint and trembling, sick at the thought of what she must see, she could do no less than obey the strange new ring of command she caught in his words. She threw the door open and re-entered her bedroom.

There on the floor it lay. There was nothing that suggested violence in the room. No displacing of furniture; the couch, the table, were as she had left them. The wine in its flagon, the glasses, stood sparkling near the lamp.

Quite easily he was disposed, on his back; on his left breast was a handkerchief, not lying flat, but arranged as if it hung on something projecting upwards. There was a patch of red, nothing terrifying, just a spurt of bright, clean colour, on the handkerchief, and the satin doublet showed just there a suggestion of stain, wetness.

But Angioletto's face, his action as he pointed to the thing on the floor, the absolute rest of its pose—in these a horror spoke that set her shuddering.

"Dead!" She spoke with a frightful hoarseness. "Oh, I shall go mad—I shall go mad!"

"Silence!" Angioletto commanded her, as he had commanded her into the room, with a tone of authority that daunted her. "Help me—this dress." He was trying to unfasten the bodice her fingers had laced for him with such crazy dexterity not half an hour earlier.

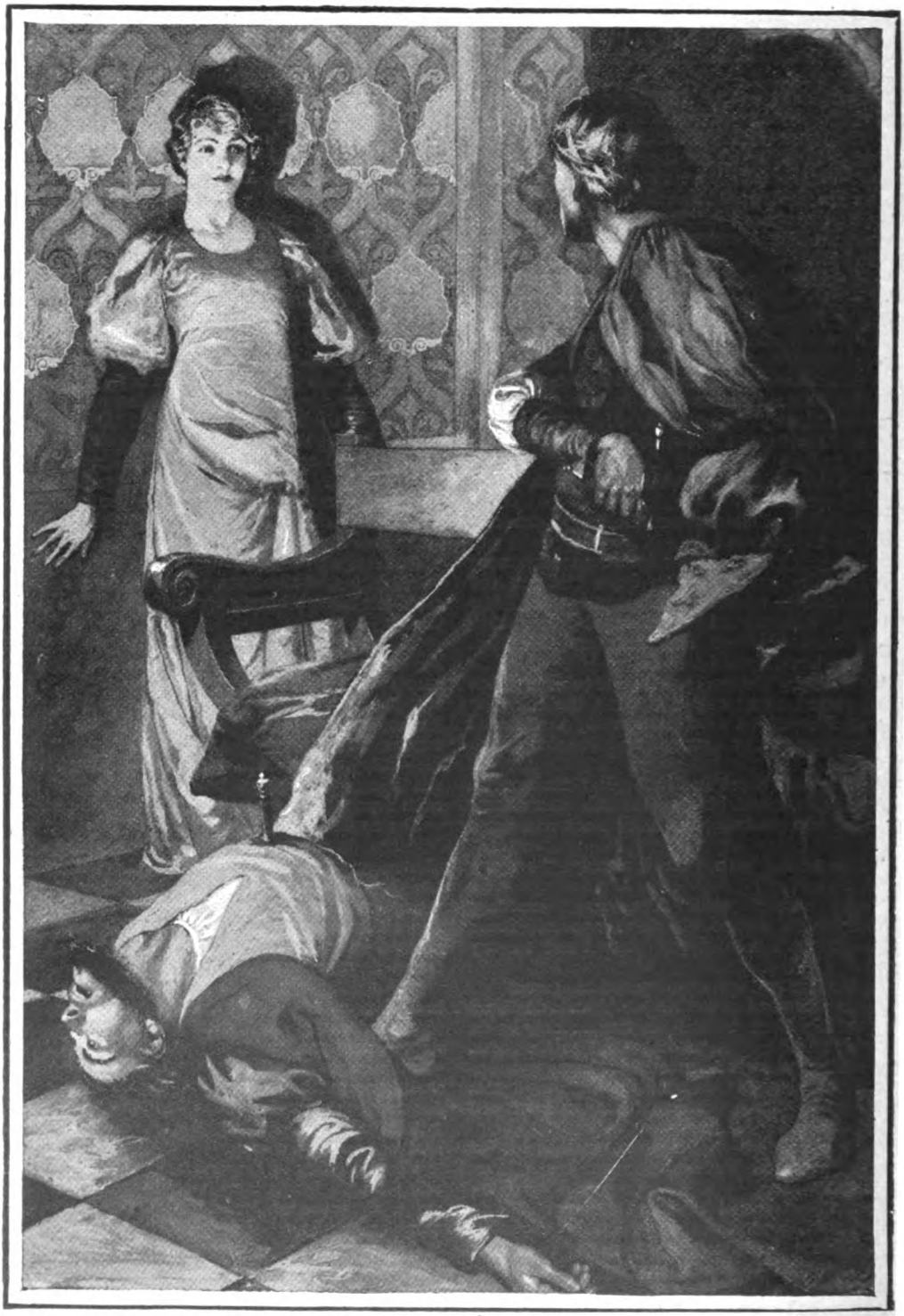
She could do nothing.

"The horror! Oh, Domenico—husband!" She began to weep pitifully. Angioletto grasped her by the wrist. "Silence, woman!" She looked at him in amazement. He was hurting her with the roughness of his grip, his very voice seemed to threaten and hurt her, his gaze was terrorizing, tyrannical, threatening.

"You hurt me." He let go her wrist. She looked at it. He had actually grazed the white skin, and her eyes filled with tears at the pain, at this new cruelty. She felt like a little child, who, hurt, seeks relief in tears, and needs comforting arms about her. Yet by a sure instinct she sought no comfort from Angioletto. "What is it?" she faltered. "You are not a boy any longer; you are a man."

His sternness never relaxed. "I know not what I am—I was man enough for that." He swept a glance of contempt at the motionless thing on the floor. Still busied with the laces of his woman's gown—"My sword," he demanded, but merely to stand, quietly sobbing, was all her strength would allow her. He managed to throw off the gown, and sped with it to the wardrobe, opened the door, threw it in, pulled out his doublet, his sword, and belt.

On his ears and hers, noticed but not noted,



"HE LEAPT ACROSS THE ROOM, LOOKED AT THE FACE AND STOOD AGHAST. 'DEAD! YOU SHE-TIGER!' HIS HAND WENT TO HIS SWORD-HILT. SPEECHLESS, SHE SHRANK BACK AGAINST THE WALL."

there had fallen during the last few seconds a confused sound of hasty movement, footsteps, voices, a hubbub, in the house, in the street, the garden. And now along the corridor sounded a rapid footstep, a knocking came on the door, insistent, warning, and a voice called, raised and imperative :—

"My lord, my lord! Your Grace!" Again the knocking, impatient and alarmed. "Your Grace!—Excellency, I must enter." The door opened, and the head of Ugolino was thrust in, explanatory and apologetic. "My lord, her husband has returned—we have him, your Grace." He was in the room now, glanced towards the alcove, swung his gaze about the room, saw what lay on the floor.

He leapt across the room, stooped, looked at the face, and stood aghast. "What's this—dead!" He pulled the handkerchief away, and in a flash knew the meaning of that stillness. "Dead!" He stared at Adelesa. "Who—how—you? You she-tiger!" His hand went to his sword-hilt. Speechless, she shrank back against the wall, and through a mist saw the light figure of Angioletto, long rapier extended, dagger poised delicately in left hand, slip towards Ugolino from the wardrobe.

The other heard him, turned round, flashed on to his guard. Angioletto was smiling.

"Fool! Put that away." Angioletto, out of range, kept his point up. He pointed to the floor. "The Duke's son—you had him in charge." He waited till the flush of fear on Ugolino's face told that he had grasped what that meant. "You'll burn for this." Ugolino lowered his point, swept a bewildered hand across his sweating forehead. Angioletto, still wary, rapier extended, drove the word of wisdom into the brute's swirling brain. "Take your one chance. Send your men away. Take horse. Fly the city."

Ugolino, breathless and dizzy, stared at him with mouth feebly opening and shutting. Angioletto stepped to him and spun him heavily round by the shoulders, pointing to the door.

"Speed, man, speed," he insisted, and gave him a push. "Death's on your heels!"

Ugolino needed but the mental spur. He looked again at the body, let his glance, still bewildered, run over the room, Adelesa, Angioletto, then his rapier slapped back into its case and, with both hands clutching at his temples, he ran from the room.

Downstairs came a sudden gust of voices, parleyings, a rush of heavy feet. The door of the house slammed, a cry or two came in through the window, the noise of men running down the street, a horse's hoofs at the gallop.

Angioletto was at the window, peering out. He had buttoned his doublet, rapier and dagger hung in his belt, his hat was in his hands. He put it on his head, slipped a knee over the sill, and looked once more to where Adelesa stood, dizzy, leaning against the wall more dead than alive.

Something that was not laughter made him laugh as he leant through the window. "Well," he said, curtly, "here's away." That was his farewell.

With sudden energy she sprang to him, caught him by the shoulder. "Wait; tell me what to do. Angioletto, help me. You saved me once, save me again. What can I say?" She made a despairing gesture towards the body on the floor, and, abandoning herself to utter despair, let her tears flow with no attempt to stay them.

He was half out of the window, glad enough to be gone, but even now her distress and her beauty called him to her aid. A pride, too, in himself, in what he had done, in her confession of her helplessness, urged him not to abandon her. He slipped back into the room, and, as she tottered towards him, caught her and upbore her.

In that second, in the contact between their bodies, as he gathered her to him, there came into his brain, full of a tremendous exaltation at what he had done, one last urging of his desire. For a second he hesitated, then a wave of new-born egotism, a conviction of mastery, swept him forward.

"Adelesa," he said, in a low voice, "if I save you now, what will you do for me?"

Barely understanding that he was questioning her, she asked him faintly, "What do you want?"

His eyes lingered over her, as he supported her, almost on his breast, her face a little beneath his, her eyes looking up into his, her lips almost touching his.

"One kiss."

She drew a long breath, was still as a dead woman for a little space, then with one hand she disengaged his supporting arms, and placing the other on his breast, she pushed him away from her.

"No."

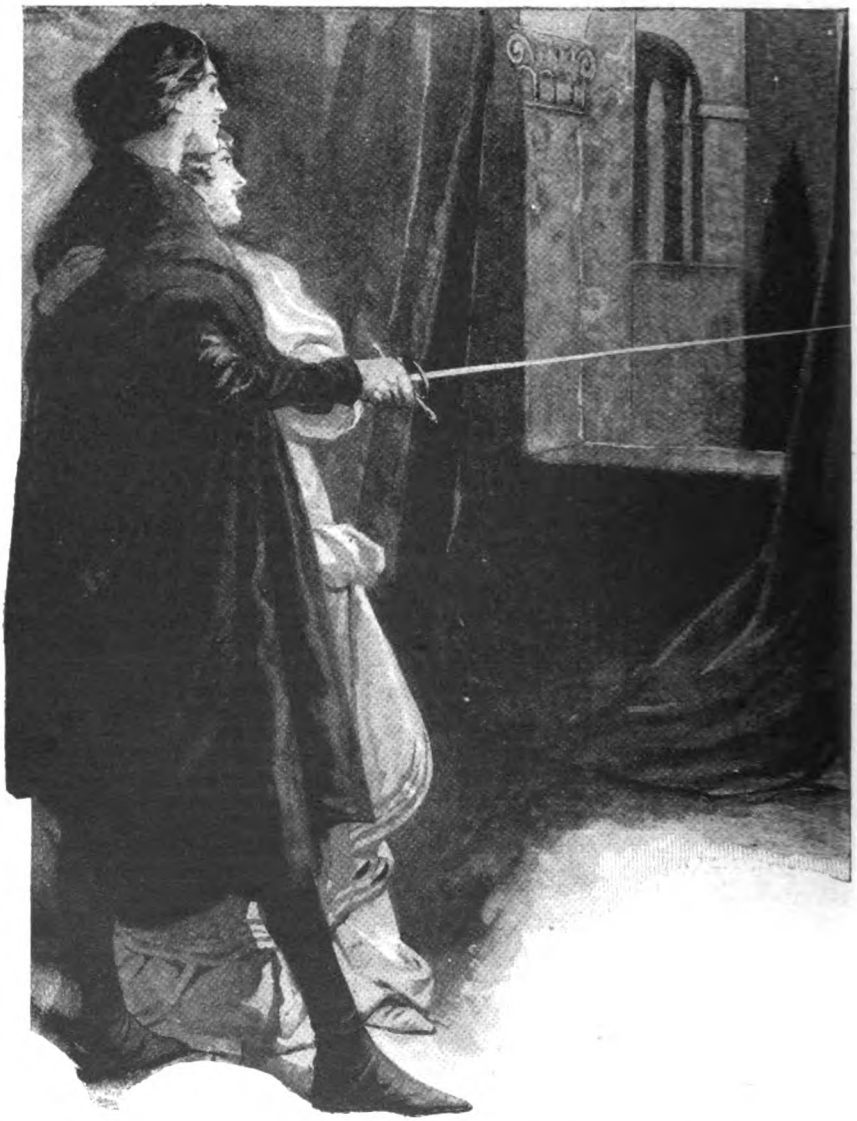
She knew her helplessness without him, but in that refusal to pay the price he asked there was expressed and for ever confirmed the contrition for her folly that had been born in her at the instant of her husband's rebuke. She would not buy Angioletto's help, no, not even if he now abandoned her. She would confront Domenico alone, if needs must, and bear what must follow. Angioletto was peering at her earnestly. She faced him uncompromisingly. He too stood motionless for a little, then he stooped, took both her hands, and raising them to his lips as he bent his head, kissed them gently.

"Well done, lady," he said, with a little laugh—and turned his back for ever on his hopes—whatever his hopes had been.

Along the corridor came the sound of feet in a great hurry. With hanging head she clasped her hands on her breast—her knees were knocking, she began to droop to the ground—and about her she felt again the clasp of Angioletto's arm, found his lips at her ear.

"Courage—now, come—let me think—I'll tell all, the fault is mine. No, wait—ha, I have a lie that will serve. Now, courage, courage." He held her tightly to him, and, rapier in hand, turned to confront the man who burst into the room.

Domenico stopped as his eyes took in the two,



"HE HELD HER TIGHTLY TO HIM, AND, RAPIER IN HAND, TURNED TO CONFRONT THE MAN WHO ANGIOLETTO, POINT EXTENDED, CHALLENGED

close clasped. Angioletto, point extended, challenged him. "You, sir, who are you?"

Domenico, hatless and breathless, ran across, checked at the point, drew his own blade.

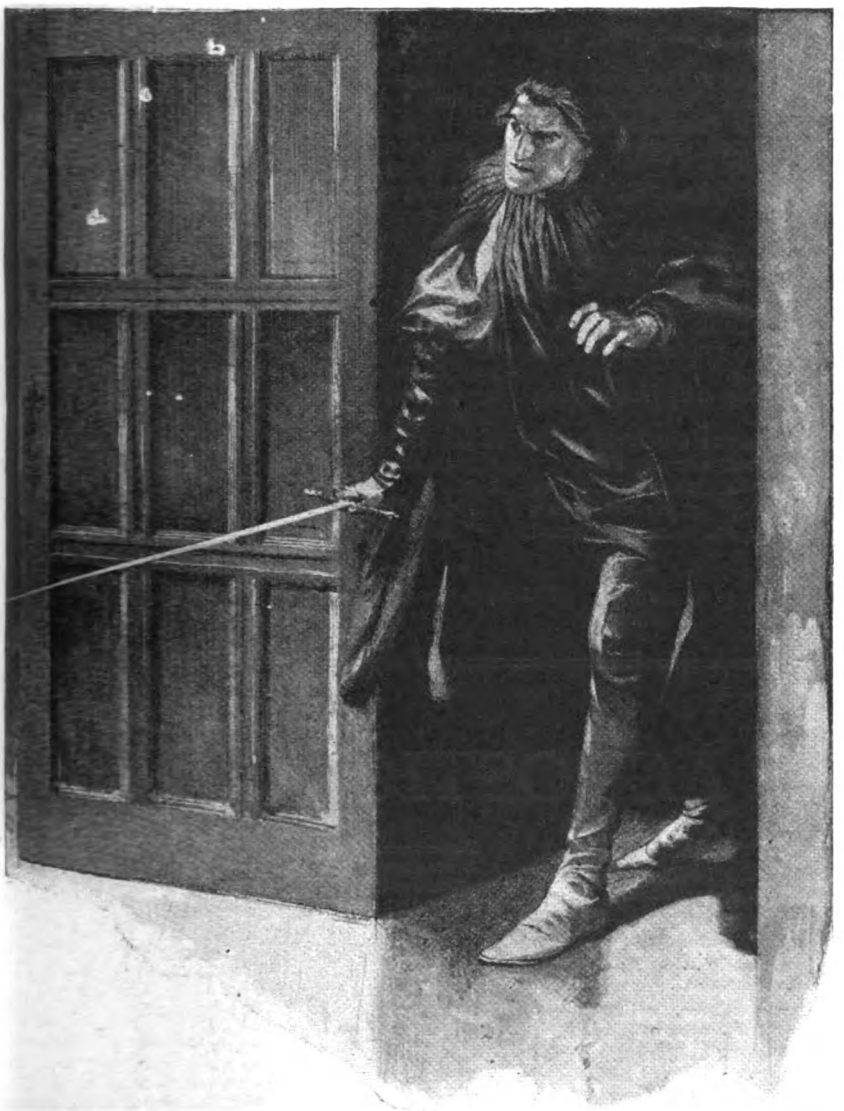
"Adelesa—wife, what is it? Give her to me!" Angioletto released her, she came unsteadily towards him, her arms outstretched, but as he clasped her to him, his glance fell on the body on the floor. "Gods! what's this——?" He leant over and stared at the rigid face. "Alessandro!—Adelesa—what's happened? You, sir"—he whipped round on to Angioletto—"what are you, friend or enemy?"

Quite calmly, his point lowered, and with a splendid dignity, Angioletto gave him the answer.

"I am a stranger. I was passing this house. I heard a woman crying. I found the house guarded. I made shift to clamber in by the window. I found this lady resisting a man. I stabbed him——"

Domenico sat down on the couch, his head in his hands. Adelesa, her terror at discovery still keeping every limb a-shake, knelt by him, caressing, explaining, desperately.

"The Duke's son, Alessandro. Oh, Domenico, he came here on me, I was frightened, he told



BURST INTO THE ROOM. DOMENICO STOPPED AS HIS EYES TOOK IN THE TWO, CLOSE CLASPED. HIM. 'YOU, SIR,' WHO ARE YOU?'"

me he knew you were away, and that he meant to take advantage of your absence. I cried out——"

Domenico lifted his head and looked at her, looked at Angioletto, at the body on the floor. There was one terrible second of suspense, then standing up he drew his wife to him and kissed her with passionate fondness. His voice, as he turned to Angioletto, was trembling.

"Sir, take my thanks, a thousand times. And thanks to God"—he went on in earnest gratitude, "to God, who has spared me the full consequences of my unjust suspicion. Adelesa"—he turned to her with a humbleness that fell on her like a scourge on her back—"I ask your pardon. I doubted you. I went on no journey. All I told you of that was a blind. I had seen that vile beast Ugolino prowling about this house, and I doubted you. Good God, I doubted you, my dearest one. I came back, thinking to trap you. Forgive me. I am ashamed. Never again will I distrust you."

She could scarcely speak, could scarcely see him for the tears that streamed down her cheeks. She threw her arms about his neck, but as she kissed him the passion that seemed to lap her

as in flame was of gratitude for the mercy that she felt had been vouchsafed her.

"As God sees me," she said, brokenly, "you never shall have cause."

Domenico gathered his wife to his breast with an emotion as deep as hers. Their lips met, her heart beat on his, her hands, trembling, sought to draw his more closely about her.

"Sir, lady," broke in a voice, "I bid you good night."

They loosed each other. Angioletto, hat in hand, handsome, unruffled, a proper gallant, made them a bow most courteously, as he stepped backwards towards the door.

Domenico stayed him. "Ah, but wait. Let me know your name, young gentleman. Think how much I am your debtor."

A ghost of a smile flickered on Angioletto's lips.

"Since you tell me this was the Duke's son I had rather say nothing, but take my leave."

Domenico flashed a proud glance at him, at the body, at Adelesa. "Sir," he replied, "thus was the Duke's son, but I am what I am, and the Duke shall abide his son's mischance. At least, at some later time, visit me."

Adelesa suddenly intervened.

"Husband," she said, pleadingly, "let me be strange—Sir," to Angioletto, who heard her gravely, yet still with that faint smile on his lips, "Sir, my heart is overflowing with gratitude to you, and to Heaven, but I will ask you never again to set foot in this house."

Domenico stared, but held his peace. Angioletto regarded both him and Adelesa for a second. Then, "You have my promise," he said.

She clasped her hands together in an ecstasy of thanks.

"Thank God!"

Angioletto bowed, again went toward the door, stopped as he reached it, and again looked round the apartment. Adelesa was in her husband's arms. Alessandro on his back near the couch seemed to be lying there, if not with an air of boredom, at least with an almost ostentatious disregard of all about him.

Angioletto shrugged his shoulders.

"Amen," he said. . . . . .

THE END.

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 66.

Two poets: in the New World lived the one;
The Old World claims the other as her son.

1. The weapon, though it now is out of date,
Reminds us that some folk exaggerate.
2. An Emperor whose life in wars was spent;
Within the cotton is the rose's scent.
3. Three words (two letters each) select, and mix:
And then your gaze upon the Second fix.
4. The means to make him win, if used aright,
Might just as well have made the dragon white.
5. On such a day Youth's wondrous victory
Evoked triumphant chant of ecstasy.
6. You only need to write the central third,
Else you will find the gist of all the word.
7. Take something round, curtail, then write instead
Another name of his; lastly, behead.
8. Here lived the cleric, and the Star hard by
And some few miles away the Butterfly.
9. The bird wants fish. Should letter leave the end
And lead, it may become your fairest friend.
10. Name? Change direction in what Nansen did.
Title? A letter in a town is hid.

PAX.

Answers to Acrostic No. 66 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on July 9th.

Two answers may be sent to every light.

It is essential that solvers, with their answers to this acrostic, should send also their real names and addresses.

ANSWER TO No. 64.

1.	N	in	E
2.	I	ç	I
3.	N	utme	G
4.	E	ight	H
5.	T	able	T
6.	E	pistyl	E
7.	E	laps	E
8.	N	uneato	N

NOTES.—Light 3. Nut, Meg. 5. Battle. 6. Epistle, with a letter inserted. Epistyle and capitals, in architecture. 7. Elapse, please. 8. Nun, eat on.

ANSWER TO No. 65.

1.	S	cepti	C
2.	T	arta	R
3.	O	utg	O
4.	N	a	P
5	E	rebu	S

NOTE.—Light 5. Mts. Erebus and Terror, about 80deg. South latitude.

For the second light of No. 62 "Prestissimo," sent by a few solvers, is accepted as correct.

Correspondents who write to the Acrostic Editor and desire answers to their queries should enclose a stamped addressed envelope with their letters, and the A.E. will endeavour to reply.

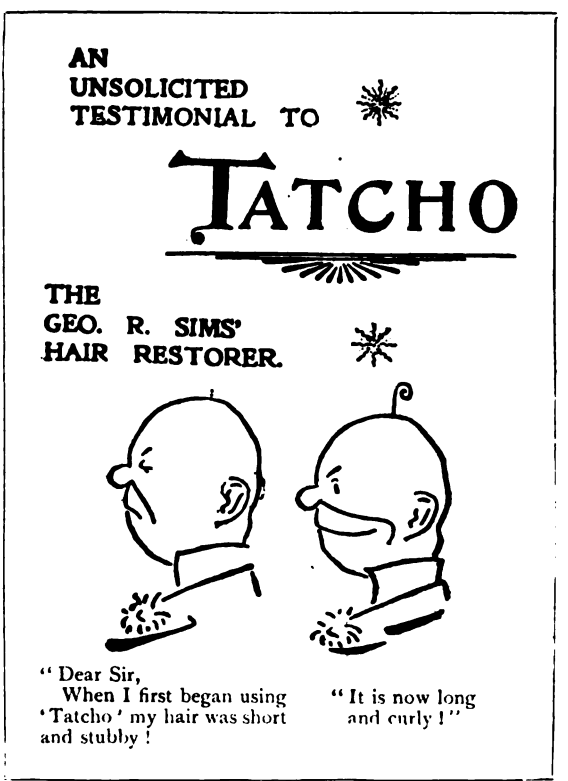
THE HUMOURS OF ADVERTISING.

By W. GREENWOOD.

Humour gives a spice to advertising, as it does to everything. What is more telling than a picture which makes people laugh? Such pictures as are reproduced in this article speak for themselves. But the humour and ingenuity of written advertisements are also very often of excellent quality, and this article recalls a few examples of the best.

SOME years ago ten well-dressed men paraded the streets of Paris; at the word of command they came to a halt in front of the restaurants, removed their hats, and, making a profound obeisance in unison, revealed this legend painted in blue letters on their denuded scalps: "Café Concert." A boot-dealer in Quebec presented with each pair of his boots a pair of over-shoes which bore in raised and reversed characters on their soles an advertisement of his wares, so that each customer when using them printed this notice on the snow at every step: "Fitall's Rubber Goods go to Great Lengths." Even more ingenious was the happy thought of an hotel-keeper in Samoa, who published the qualities of his beer in white letters painted on the abdomens of adipose natives and on the soles of boys' feet, so that when they dived for coppers alongside the mail steamers, "Pink's Beer" was the last seen of them as they vanished into the depths.

Even tropical, spice-scented Ceylon proved the other day that she does not mean to be left behind in advertising ingenuity. A firm of whisky-sellers there engaged an aeronaut to give a series of balloon-ascents, showering, as he ascended, hundreds of sample bottles of whisky attached to miniature parachutes. Each ascent, moreover, had a brilliant finale in a display of fireworks.



In Great Britain one of the most daring efforts in advertisement was made a few years ago by the proprietors of a well-known brand of pills. When the famous old battleship *Foudroyant* was wrecked off Blackpool, her owner, Mr. G. Wheatley Cobb, and his crew left her for the night to take a well-earned rest on shore. On returning to the stranded vessel the next morning they were greeted by the words, "Blank's Pills," painted in large letters on the venerable hull. Once the *Glasgow*

by no means hopelessly outclassed by his American cousin in ingenious and amusing advertisement. Here are a few more samples of his skill.

Not long ago in the window of a City shop was to be seen this notice: "These gloves are on our hands. We would much rather that they were on yours." "If you do not see what you want in the window," ran an Islington announcement, "come inside and you will want what you do see." Behind the bar of an inn near Hayes, Middlesex, the following notice is displayed: "All spirits sold in this establishment contain as much liquor as the landlord can get into them." A London hosier thus introduces his ties:—

> There are friendship's ties and business ties,
> And family ties by birth,
> But you will find the ties we advertise
> The smartest ties on earth.

Happily, it is seldom that tragedy enters into the field of advertisement, as in the following cases, of quite recent history. Miss Louise Douglas, wishing to advertise her forthcoming *News* was advertised to the world in a form as artistic as conspicuous. On the side of a hill near Ardenlee the words "*Glasgow News*" were cut in the form of flower beds, each letter being forty feet long and the total length of the line three hundred and twenty-three feet.

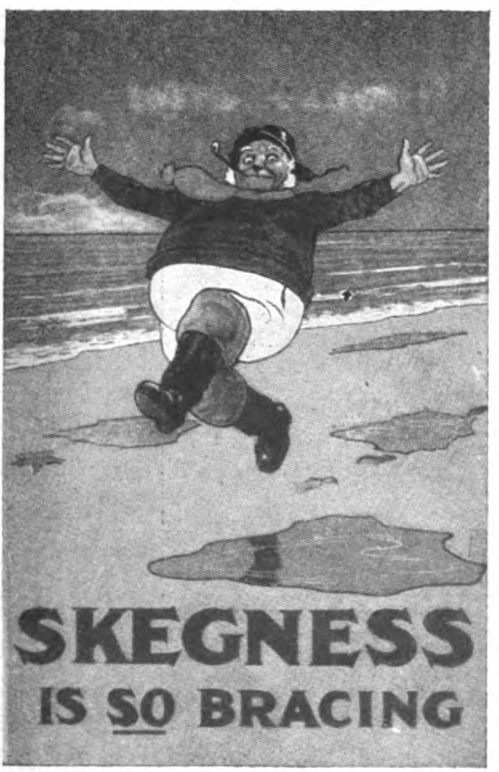
Among recent novel advertisements on a more modest scale may be mentioned that of a tailor of Boston, Lincolnshire, who placed in his window ten large tortoises, each having one letter of his name painted on its back, a prize being offered to anyone who should see the tortoises arrange themselves in the exact order necessary to spell his name. The Islington furniture-dealer in whose shop window a newly-married couple once partook of their wedding feast in full view of admiring and possibly envious thousands must also have been a man of no little resource.

The English advertiser is

appearance at a Nebraska theatre, took extraordinary means of attracting notice by swallowing a live chameleon. She died a few hours later, after suffering terrible agonies, and an autopsy revealed the animal still living in her body. In order to draw attention to one of his books, which had been refused by publishers both in Europe and America, Charles Pollard, an Irish author, committed suicide at the foot of a cross on the summit of a New Zealand volcano. With a similar object, Miss Edith Allanby, a Lancashire schoolmistress, took a fatal draught of carbolic acid. "Now that I am dead," wrote the poor woman, "the book may be taken seriously"; while Lionel Terry shot a Chinaman dead in the streets of Wellington, New Zealand, in order to call attention to the "Yellow Peril," and to advertise a book, "The Shadow of the Empire," which he had written on the subject.

In original and sensational advertising Uncle Sam claims to "lick creation"; and whether or not his claim is justifiable, he certainly has little to learn of the art.

Not many years since, thousands of people in the States were driven to the verge of lunacy by a cryptic advertisement which met and baffled them wherever they went. Whatever

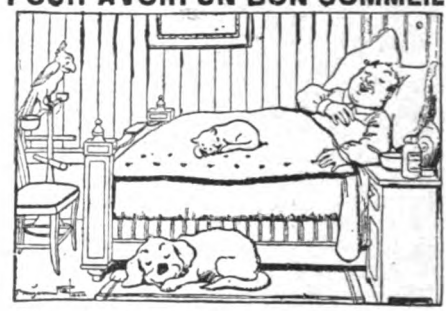


newspaper or magazine they opened, there was the puzzle staring them tantalizingly in the face; it defied them from almost every hoarding in towns and every barn-door and fence in the country; forest trees were hewn down by the score on the Pennsylvania Railroad to give an uninterrupted view of a mountain side from which it stared in letters four hundred feet high, and all the rocks near Niagara Falls flaunted the same mystic legend —"S.T. 1860 X."

What could be the meaning of these ubiquitous and provoking symbols, everybody asked everybody else; hundreds of thousands of dollars were wagered on them; life-long friends came to words and blows about them; discord was sown in peaceful families; America, in short, was driven almost crazy by the three letters and four figures. Then, just as human nature had reached its limit of endurance, the ingenious advertiser of a certain commodity called "Plantation Bitters" supplied the clue. "S.T. 1860 X" stood for nothing more startling than a history in epitome of his business success—"Started Trade in 1860 with Ten dollars."

Not long ago a Brooklyn tradesman conceived a highly original scheme which deserved better success

than attended it. He had his advertisement affixed in raised letters to the tyres of an automobile, so that when the letters were, by an ingenious arrangement, coated over with white paint, the machine left a wake of advertisements on the asphalt roads over which



Why does that man sleep so well?
Because, to sleep well, one must have good digestion.
To have good digestion one must take Charbon de Belloc. He has done so. Why not do as he does?

A SPECIMEN OF A FRENCH ADVERTISEMENT.

it was driven. Unfortunately, the authorities, not disposed to encourage such enterprise, threatened legal reprisals, and thus nipped the scheme in the bud.

No one knows the value of advertisements better than the American farmers who, a few years ago, made each pumpkin or "squash" they grew proclaim its own virtues to the world. Letters were cut on the pumpkins while young so that in their maturity they were sent forth bearing such legends as these in large letters: "How many pies do you think I make? Two hundred, if I weigh an ounce"; "This is the kind we grow up the Hudson River"; and "Fell downstairs when I was young"—each with the farmer's name and address subscribed.

A familiar sight in the streets of New York a short time ago was a small procession made up thus. In front stalked a gigantic wooden bottle labelled "Stagg's Columbia Relish," over which floated a banner with the words, "I lead the way." Close behind followed an enormous cruet-stand on wheels, with four cruets, of which one was empty; while far in the rear panted two small boys in diminutive bottles, labelled "Other people's sauce—we can't catch up."

A Chicago firm was responsible for a procession of porkers, each well-fed animal proclaiming on its plump sides that "Blank and Blank's sausages are the best! *We* can guarantee them"; while a New York theatrical manager struck out a novel line by distributing broadcast cheques for four cents, accompanied by this message: "Sir,—Assuming that your income is fifteen thousand dollars a year, and that you appreciate the fact that 'Time is money,' we enclose our cheque for four cents in payment for two minutes of your time at that rate, to be employed in carefully reading a brief and honest statement of a few of the many original, novel, applause-winning features to be found in the new three-act musical farce to be produced for the first time in New York on Monday evening."

Even death is not sacred to the Yankee advertiser, as witness the following inscription on the tombstone of a member of a Tennessee firm: "Sacred to the memory of John Wills, for twenty years senior partner of the firm of Wills and Butt, now J. J. Butt and Co."; and this: "Mr. Bronson has the honour and regret to inform his friends and patrons that he has just published a new waltz, 'The Breeze of Ontario,' and lost his daughter, May Ann Deborah, aged fifteen years. The waltz is on sale at the music-sellers, and the funeral will take place to-morrow at eleven o'clock."

No less unconventional was the resourcefulness of the New York hatter who, by offering to pay one hundred and twenty-five dollars to the widow of a man condemned to death, secured a startling advertisement for his wares from the foot of the gallows. When the doomed man was standing on the trap he begged permission to speak a few farewell words. Permission was granted, and in a loud, firm voice he proceeded: "All I have to say is that the best two-dollar hat in America can be obtained of Mr. Blank, hatter, No. 3, Line Street." A moment later he was in eternity!

Even into the commonplace newspaper or window advertisement the American infuses a vigour and originality which is rarely seen on the western side of the Atlantic. Here are a few samples from the window of a New York hosier, each a gem—in its way: "These shirts ought to be next your heart." "Our ties speak for themselves; you can hear them two blocks away." "The silkworms would die of grief if they knew that we were giving their produce away for next to nothing." "Our kids are always good; one dollar and a half for twins."

The Stake in Waiting.

A TALE OF HENLEY.

By HYLTON CLEAVER.

Illustrated by Graham Simmons.

I.

GARRY BOWEN was a young man with a clean-cut countenance and quite a nice taste in suitings. Dignity was very dear to him, and his trouble at the moment was that his dear dignity was being unpardonably offended. He had shot sideways and cannoned into a wall. An enormous hand, lobster-red, had reached over his shoulder and, gathering the lapels of his jacket into a bunch, had tugged him back. Then an arm had swung round the small of his back and, lifting him up, had projected him forward in the very direction in which he had no desire to go. One moment he noticed the pavement. The next he had landed upon it in a heap, and for a moment he lay where he fell, realizing the truth. He, Garry Bowen, had been chucked out of a music-hall.

At last he rose. His first duty was clear. It was to maintain his calm, and to recover, if he could, his dignity. He must replace his eyeglass, adjust the hang of his trousers, and reclaim his hat. This he did as best he could in the midst of the turmoil. Then he cast his eye thoughtfully at the young men who were landing on the pavement beside him one by one. They were all shouting. One clutched hold of him and called him "Old Man."

Garry turned to him courteously, adopted an easy pose, not without grace, and tapped him upon the waistcoat.

"Pardon me, sir," said he, "but could you possibly tell me why I have been chucked out of that music-hall?"

The other gazed at him with swimming eyes for a few brief moments, and then spoke.

"Why," said he, "don't you—you *don't* belong to ush?"

Garry shook his head.

"Curiously enough," said he, "I have nothing whatever to do with you. That's what made me wonder."

The other looked him over considerately, and at last he gave a foolish, cackling laugh.

"I know why it ish," he announced. "They've put a *chalk mark* on your back. We've *all* got chalk marks on our backs. They did it *inside* when they were rounding ush up. It's so that we sha'n't get *in* again; and they've done it to *you*."

Afterwards, things moved rapidly; and when Garry came to look back, the events that followed seemed to pass before his mind's eye like scenes of a five-part drama turned upon the reel with furious speed.

He had taken hold of the commissionaire who had done the deed by one of his brass buttons, and had tried to explain. In return he had been unceremoniously hustled into the gutter and shown the way off. Here his equable temper had at last got the better of him and he had turned with a graceful swing and dealt his persecutor a nimble blow in the eye. Next he remembered the appearance of a policeman, and before he was fully aware of what had happened, Garry, with mud-splashed summer spats and dented hat, his eyeglass dangling at his waist, was being frog-marched down Piccadilly, solemnly protesting that he had had nothing whatever to do with the fracas, that it was all a futile and fat-headed mistake, and occasionally mentioning, in an apologetic undertone, the interesting fact that he had left a pair of dog-skin gloves under his seat.

He was not even drunk.

His solitary offence lay in the fact that he had been to a music-hall.

Garry's father was not a rowing enthusiast. He was a rowing fanatic. One could well imagine this from a glance at him. He was a short, square old man with the face of a bulldog, and he took an altogether excessive pride in a very old straw hat which he wore all the year round, adorned with the faded hat-band of Leander.

Before Garry came to him in the garden he knew what had happened.

They had dropped Garry out of the crew. Nobody had asked any questions. The vice-president of the club had seen Garry on the borders of Leicester Square, and had formed the opinion on the spot that he was not responsible for his actions. This was perfectly true, of course. Had he been responsible for his actions at that time, they would have been taking him in an entirely different direction.

Garry came across the lawn with studied dignity, his dark hair glistening in the sun.

Nobody except Mary believed that Garry was enthusiastic about anything except his personal appearance. This was Garry's own fault. He had liked to make them think it. The only folk he was inclined to respect were those who could see through him; these knew that he was not much more than a sensitive schoolboy in disguise. But they were very few.

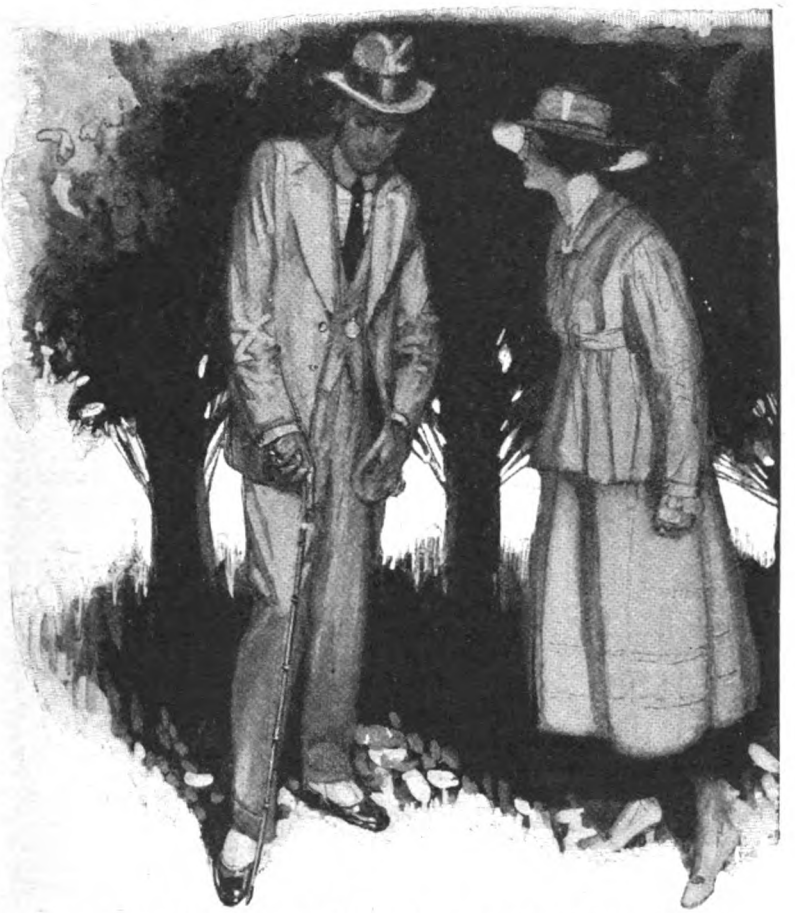
To most, his pose was too convincing.

His own father, for example, had always been deceived.

He looked up now and stared at Garry moodily. He was a very old man, and when at last he spoke his voice was broken.

"*You can go,*" said he. Then paused, and seemed to be remembering the past. "My ambition was to have a son. You came. Then my ambition was to see you stroke a crew to victory at Henley. To that end I cast every possible opportunity into your lap. You had four years at Cambridge and couldn't get your Blue. I didn't blame you. Only one man can stroke the crew, and I wouldn't let you row anywhere else. At last you came down. I've indulged your every wish to help you keep up rowing. As you wouldn't have had much chance with Leander, I let you join the Surrey Club. It was a toss-up between you and Mullin for stroke. They chose you."

He stopped. He had been speaking in the slow, reminiscent way of an old salt telling a story. At last he looked up in real grief.



"'I KNOW IT ISN'T TRUE,' SHE SAID. HE TOOK A SUDDEN STEP FORWARD. 'YOU'RE A BRICK,' SAID HE."

"You've taken all I could give you, and in return you've brought me disgrace. You were in training, and you got drunk at a music-hall. They chucked you out into the street, and then you fought and were run in. The club have dropped you. And," he said, with a fervent raising of his voice, "they're right. I'd have dropped you myself—my own son. A man who doesn't know when to get tight and when to play the game is no use in a crew at all." He paused again, as if to give added emphasis to his final words. "You can go."

At first Garry was too amazed to speak. He had expected to be condemned without a hearing by the club. He had had to fight for his place, and had barely held it. Maybe this thing had provided good opportunity to give the other man his trial. But he was desperately disappointed in his father.

He had never allowed the old man to know it, but he had loved him very well. What hurt him now was the discovery that he was to be given no chance to speak. The word of a policeman and a commissionaire were to be unconditionally accepted not merely by a magistrate, but even by his own father. He did not ask for a hearing. He made no attempt to explain. He was too proud. If the old man were ready to believe the worst at a moment's notice, it was no use having anything to say. Perhaps one day he would find out, and then he would be sorry.

Garry's bearing was exactly true to his absurd disguise.

He fixed his eyeglass and gazed at his father with polite interest. Then he turned his head and cast a regretful eye at the hang of his trousers, examined his right spat; at last he moved, with slow and leisurely grace, across the lawn. He did not say good-bye. He was a little afraid of the lump in his throat. He acted his part very well indeed. Pretending to be only very faintly concerned, he went.

As for the boathouse, he had been there once and he was not going there again. He knew the verdict. Nobody had said anything. They had just left him out. He had not told them that his whole soul had been filled with a great resolve to stroke that crew to victory in the Grand. He let them think what they liked. So they

thought of him as a foolish young man whose chief pride was in his hats.

Before he went away he decided that he wanted to see Mary.

Mary was small and compact and could run like a stag, and he believed that it would be very enjoyable indeed to go through life arm-in-arm with Mary all the way.

He thought of calling at her house, but fortunately he met her beside the river. At first neither spoke. Mary just looked at him, and he lifted his hat and put it back carefully at exactly the right setting, and then he leaned upon his stick and fixed her with an inquisitive eye. He wanted to see just how far this play-acting business went with Mary.

"Have they dropped you?"

"Yes," said he, and spoke cheerfully. This was because he knew she understood without him telling her that he was nearly as heart-broken as his father.

"But it isn't true," said she; "is it?"

"Everybody takes it for granted it is," he answered, crisply. "So I suppose it must be."

Mary turned away.

"I wanted you to stroke that crew awfully. I—I've nearly been praying for you, I think. I——"

He was on the point of explaining, when Mary looked at him, and he knew there would be no need.

She liked him extraordinarily well; when he was a very little older she would love him.

"I know it isn't true," she said.

He took a sudden step forward. "You're a brick," said he. "And now I'm going to promise you something as solemnly as I can. People think I can't do it. I can. I don't care a hang whether they believe this about me or not. I'm going away now, but I shall come back; and I'm going to stroke a crew at Henley and win. It won't be this year—not now. But I shall do it. And I'm going to do it for *you*. Not for the old man, or for a club, but for *you*, because you do believe I'm a trier. You're the only one that I can't deceive. You know the truth. It's not a rash promise or I wouldn't make it. But I want you to believe that it's a *real* promise, and that I won't go back on it. I've asked you once to marry me. Well, before I ask you again I'll keep that promise."

Mary looked up at him. She could wait. She wanted him to be a little older—and she wanted him to do one good thing that would help him to find himself before he took her into the hollow of his arm. Yes, she could wait. She said nothing. She just looked. Then he gripped her hand and, forgetting his eyeglass and his summer spats, he turned and went awkwardly away.

Two months later came war, and this was the one thing Garry had left uncounted.

II.

GARRY had been living through the years in drear depression. He had only seen Mary once in forty months. He had heard that his father had died. Garry had been almost unceasingly in France, and his leave had only brought him silly hypocritical periods in which he slept and bathed and lived a gay brief life without a shadow of enjoyment, because the England that brought him nearer to Mary only took her farther away from him. The promise was a curse; but he did not want releasing. The proof of his worth would lie in his keeping that promise in spite of the uncounted cost. It had been a silly promise, made by a boy. A man was going to keep it.

Mary did not write. He could only guess why. In his heart he believed she was going to wait; he believed she trusted him. Perhaps she knew that to write would only hurt. He certainly saw she understood that to have offered him release from that devout vow would have only seemed to intimate that since it was going to be more difficult than he had expected he would not wish to keep it; and that would be a beastly intimation.

The little professor was his saviour. Garry found him sitting in a shell-hole watching the star-shells with the dreamy eyes of a child, and when Garry, who was scouting about with a party of men for old iron and wire with which to strengthen the newly-won green line, tumbled upon him unexpectedly, he looked up with distinct irritation, and spoke in a shrill and piping voice.

"Halloa!" said he. "Hang you, I thought I was going to die."

Garry cocked his eye as if to receive again that discarded eyeglass, and peered upon him with unusual severity.

"You can't die here," said he. "There's a proper place for that. In a few days we shall have to be cleaning up all this, ready for some other battalion to take over, and you'll be a nuisance lying here dead."

Next moment he was upon his knees tearing open the little professor's buttons one by one and fumbling for his wound.

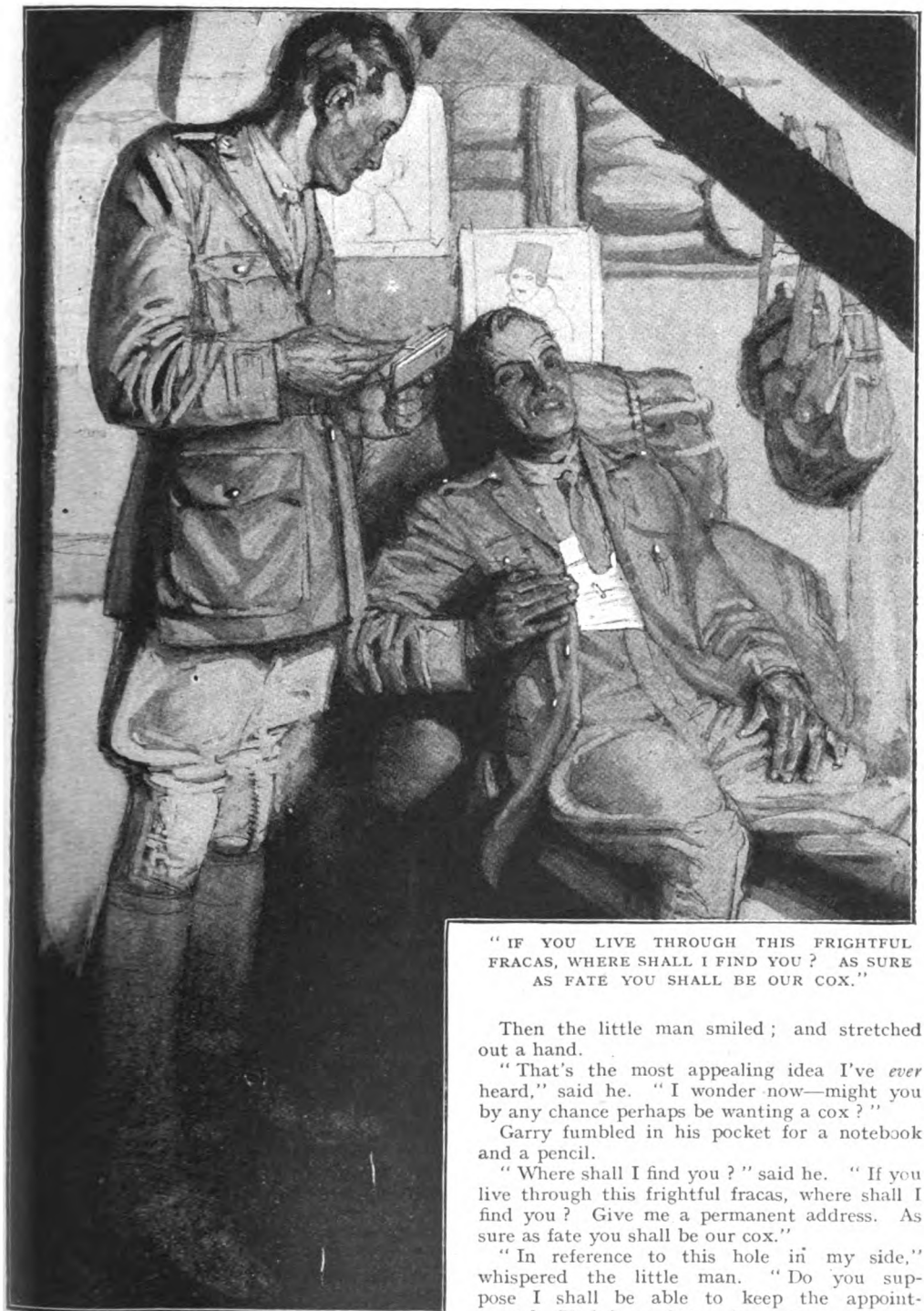
Suddenly the little fellow had disclosed himself.

"Heavens!" said he. "I *know* you. I thought I did. You're Garry Bowen. I," he added, proudly, "am Carrington."

"It's true," said Garry, staring at him urgently. "You're the fellow who took a first in Mods. when you were about twelve. Next time I noticed you you were coxing the 'Varsity crew. They used to call you the little professor."

And so, whilst Garry bound him up and carried him to a dug-out, the plan was made. It came to Garry in a flash at the end of a wonderful debate between them on 'Varsity boats.

"Listen, professor," he announced. "First Henley after the war I'm going to stroke a crew to victory. It happens to be an oath I made. And I'm not going to benefit any old club by doing it. I'm going to do it all by myself, and I'll tell you now *how* I'm going to do it. I'm going to raise a raggy old crew from the B.E.F. —eight men from the line. From now till peace I'm going to seek out rowing men wherever they are in this unholy country and make them swear an oath to row for my crew the first Henley after the war. It's just come to me—seeing you and



"IF YOU LIVE THROUGH THIS FRIGHTFUL FRACAS, WHERE SHALL I FIND YOU? AS SURE AS FATE YOU SHALL BE OUR COX."

talking boats. I'll get the best eight men in France. And I'll stroke 'em."

The little professor seemed a trifle vacant. Garry explained.

Then the little man smiled; and stretched out a hand.

"That's the most appealing idea I've *ever* heard," said he. "I wonder now—might you by any chance perhaps be wanting a cox?"

Garry fumbled in his pocket for a notebook and a pencil.

"Where shall I find you?" said he. "If you live through this frightful fracas, where shall I find you? Give me a permanent address. As sure as fate you shall be our cox."

"In reference to this hole in my side," whispered the little man. "Do you suppose I shall be able to keep the appointment? Hadn't we better have the race down under?"

Garry tapped the notebook impatiently.

"Give me your address, you dear little man," said he. "Give me your address. Here's your

stretcher outside. You're going home. Give me your address, confound you."

He was unshaved and streaked with mud. Also he was evidently in pain, but when they had lifted him on to the stretcher, he rose to a sitting position and placed his hand upon his heart.

"I seem to see Phyllis Court," said he. "I seem to see myself in a white top-hat. I hope it doesn't mean I'm going to die."

Afterwards Garry became a kind of fanatic rather upon his father's lines. He spent most of his leisure time in writing to the *Field* for the last-known address of this man and that—all England's most prominent oarsmen—and when the Editor had answered all his letters, Garry wrote round France to obtain their promises. He kept all their addresses in a little book, and against their names there stood recorded the date on which they had joined his crew. Some of them went under. Garry sighed and wrote back to the *Field* for more addresses.

The little professor recovered slowly. Sometimes he wrote to Garry and said, "I shall never be fit in time. I shall never be fit in time," and his letters were smeared apparently with tear-drops.

Others wrote to Garry and said, "There will never be any more Henley. What's the use?"

But Garry was adamant. They spoke of him towards the end as the man who went round France like the spirit of a raffle, with a pencil and a laundry book, tapping gentlemen on the shoulder and saying:—

"Pardon me, sir, may I put you down for my crew—First Henley after the war?" And each time a man dropped out of it with a bullet through his heart, Garry licked his pencil and sighed and substituted another name.

III.

It was not, in the end, quite such a good list on paper as it had once seemed likely to be. But they were eight of the best men left alive. And they made up a Mother Country crew. There was bound to have been a race for a crew like that, and when the word was whispered about that a man called Bowen had picked men ready to race, the men of high place on the river who sat in council were very pleased with him, and they noised it abroad amongst the Colonies. "Garry will row for England!" said they. "Who will row for you?" And the Colonies spoke, saying, "This man and that man and these and those—yes, we will sure race you." And it was so.

Garry took his men to Henley at the end of May, where they spent a fair part of their gratuities in board and rental and as much more as they could each afford in building up their might for the fray.

Garry was not a moneyed man, and he wondered whether his cash could be eked out to the end. After all one could always borrow. He sent no word to Mary and Mary sent no word to him. But he knew that she must have read in the papers that he was going to keep his promise and he thought that she would be thinking kindly of him.

He didn't know.

He became a grave young man with a visage of premature severity, and few smiles. Only the little professor understood why; he alone was in the secret. And he was well aware that Garry could not help thinking, "Supposing I lose? What shall I do then? How can I wait another year?" The little professor himself was only wondering what Mary would do if Garry lost. Would she be tired of waiting?

News came to Garry through the by-ways that as yet she was no man's promised. The people who told him didn't know the truth, and so he used to smile, not realizing that he himself didn't know either. But it made the race to come as well worth having lived for as anything on earth could be.

At last came the opening day. But before the flags were fluttering at the mast-heads, Garry's men and the Mother Country crew had seen all that they had against them and understood just how hard it was going to be to win, and the first day's morning papers didn't help.

They wrote that the crew was made up of seven men of good repute and a stroke of unknown quantity, and Garry could have kicked the men who wrote such rude things, but he lay doggo and fidgeted instead.

The little professor read these witty writings and then he turned to Garry and said:—

"Unknown quantity, my grandmother. What they don't understand is that it's you that makes the equation. You've made the eight men, that without you would only have been a kind of poker party, into a crew. Nobody can see that but *me*. My mother always used to say that I was the clever one, and, by gad, I suppose she was right."

They drew South Africa in the first heat, and Garry finished with a long and polished stroke, just nicely ahead of them. By means of other heats there came into the final against him eight men from Australia, and the little professor looked them over thoughtfully as they paddled in after their race.

"We row *them*," said he. "Take a good look at 'em. They're good boys. I thought of going to Australia once, myself. Supposing I had. I might have been coxing them to-day. 'Stead of which I'm coxing you just for the sake of being somebody's best man once in my life before I get screwed down. You ought to be glad I didn't go."

Garry never so much as smiled. His thoughts were very far away, and they stayed away until the hour came for the final, and he found himself looking round the crew with a fatherly eye and wondering if they could do it.

"They've beaten New Zealand," he whispered, "and they've beaten Canada. What if they beat us?"

Back on the stake-boat again he turned his head and regarded the B.E.F. once more. They were smiling good-humouredly. Half of them seemed to be thinking more of the prettiness of Henley again after all these years, and of the

"GARRY MASTERED HIS FAILING ENERGY FOR ONE FINER, BIGGER SPURT YET. IT WAS GOING TO BE THE DIVIDING LINE BETWEEN VICTORY AND DEFEAT."

wonder of it, than of the race to come. He began to bite his lip. He looked across to Australia and took stock of their stamp. Stroke had red hair. To the end of his life he never forgot it.

Then the starter was talking. He listened dully. His blade turned slowly towards the water ready for the dip; that first stroke was pre-eminent in his mind; every nerve in his body was tight and tense with waiting for it. He was only faintly conscious that the little professor was there; he was just looking straight through him to a kind of promised land behind, where Mary stood waiting.

He sat still as a graven image. The little professor's voice sounded upon his ears in an uncanny way. He was telling them to watch—and wait—and watch.

Next moment they were off. Before he was half aware of it all, he had taken his third and his fourth and his fifth stroke. They were splashing a little, rocking a little, but they had fairly started; every moment they were gathering speed; he made no sound; there was no kind of gasping for breath, but he was setting them the hottest start he knew how, and they were keeping with him like heroes.

At last, when he was certain that the first slight wildness of the start had died away, and that the crew were following him into their proper length, he dared to turn his head in search of the red-haired man who was against him, and for a moment he could not understand why he could only see the canvas of a boat.

Then something in the little professor's face told him why, and without a second's hesitation he opened into a spurt. The little man tumbled to the need before the effort started and his voice went ringing down the water until it reached bow, and every man in the boat knew what was to come. Next he was counting out the time in screeches, and Garry was arching his shoulders over the forward swing and dropping them at the finish in a style that made this no ordinary racing spurt; there was a fire and devilry in it all that would not accept the clear fact that Australia were ahead; Garry's eyes were fixed with a stern light on the watch above his feet, and he took no note of anything, nor even of the other man's red hair until he knew that the stroke was over forty a minute and that he had not lost his length. Then from between the gasps that he could not keep from coming now, he shouted out to the little professor:—

"Are we up?"

The little professor paid not the slightest heed. His eyes were bent on the length of the crew, whilst his small, contorted face was letting loose a long and astonishing string of appealing cries.

Garry turned his head.

Yes, the red-haired man had come back. Garry could see now more than the canvas of that boat. The Mother Country had caught Australia up. They were going now neck and neck in a ding-dong struggle for the final lead. It was great, but it was awful.

Garry mastered his failing energy for one finer, bigger spurt yet. It was going to be the dividing line between victory and defeat. He had caught the man with the red hair, but he had not yet got ahead. At any second that terrible rival might put in as great a spurt as Garry's and draw away out of sight. Garry looked to the little professor desperately, and the little professor understood.

"We're going for it again," he bellowed, and his voice was agonizing with the strain. "We're going to do it or bust. Follow your stroke! He's hitting it up! Take it now. Take it along, then. Take it along, and take it *up!*"

In the bow of the boat they could not hear him.

The dense crowd had taken away all the power he had ever had of making his cracked tones reach to them there. Now and again they saw the workings of his face, and knew what he wanted, and they did their best to watch the dipping of the blades and take the timing from the swinging shoulders of the men ahead. But the roar from the banks was deafening. They were hardly conscious of it, but they knew that a great kaleidoscope of colour was stretching along the banks to either side, and that the crowd were swaying towards them as they passed and whacking them on, as it were, with hats and handkerchiefs.

Garry never knew. He had lost all thought of Mary. He did not imagine her cheering to him as he rowed. He imagined nothing but the Red Man winning, and his soul was athrob. Garry had passed him and he was ahead, but this was not enough. He knew with a deadly certainty that that red-haired terror had another spurt to come, and that somehow he and the men he had picked in France were bound to answer it.

The purple-coloured face of the little professor bore out his own anxiety. In the race against South Africa he had carried himself with a lofty dignity. In this he was like a bobbing maniac. And all the while Garry kept watching for that other fellow's spurt, and he knew it was bound to come.

He found himself growing weak. His legs were working now like senseless things that he could not believe were even his, his arms were cramped and wet with the perspiration of exhaustion. He could only see dimly.

For any other purpose but that which he had as a signal before the windows of his mind, he must have cracked and been defeated.

But he knew that it was Mary or nothing, and that he had to win. So at last the moment that he had been so grimly watching for came suddenly. In an amazing flash the red-haired fellow had quickened to a desperate effort. His boat was drawing up towards the Mother Country. The spurt was good and fast, and it drew on Garry with a dread intention that did away with all Garry's doubts.

Then he cast up his eyes to heaven and put out the strength of his body in his final answer. The little professor was calling out the time in a hopeless sob that no living man could hear, but the crew were watching him and they saw his small head bobbing to the dipping of Garry's blade. And to the wondrous roar of deafening cheers from the river banks, where the loaded punts were herded behind great booms, the Mother Country crew followed their leader into the greatness of the finish.

Somehow he only remembered afterwards stopping because he was made to stop by the little professor. But never in his life could he remember the proper ending as it must have come.

He knew that he looked to the little professor wildly when he was made to stop, and said: "Why? Why? Why?"

And that the little professor answered with a

cracked voice and a pathetic squeak: "Oh, fathead, because you've won!"

Mary came out of the crowd, and only when he felt a hand on his shoulder that he knew was hers did Garry turn. The hand came down by slow degrees from his shoulder and took his.

"I've done it, you see," said he, and he seemed breathless and done. "I've kept my promise——"

"Oh, I do congratulate you. Whatever you did it for, it was fine!"

He felt the steady pressure of her hand and he held it tight.

But there was something in her manner that troubled him.

It was something that made her seem so real a friend, as to be nothing more. He looked at her.

"What do you mean?" said he. "Whatever I did it *for?* Didn't you know I'd keep my word?"

"I *did* believe it when you said it, and I was proud. Only I saw your father two days later, and he told me."

"Told you what?" snapped Garry. He was looking at her fiercely. There was something behind it all and he was going to dig it out.

"About the will."

"What will?"

She was almost impatient.

"Oh, you know well enough," she answered. "Please don't tease."

"I don't know anything about any will at all," said Garry, passionately. "I don't know what you're talking about. All I know is that I'm penniless—and my gratuity's all gone. I'm going to make you marry me, but I don't know what we're going to live on."

Garry seized her by the arm and drew her firmly towards him.

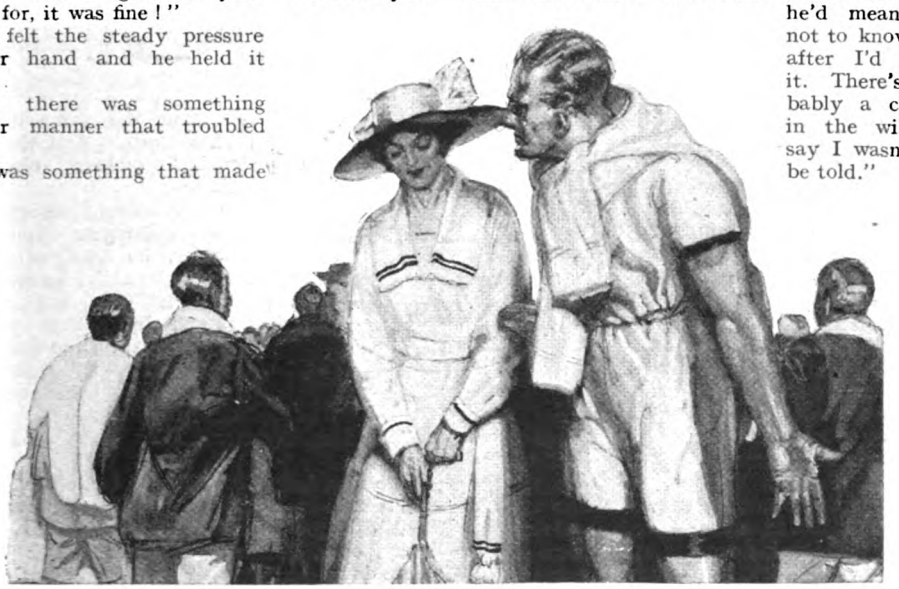
"Tell me what on earth you're talking about," said he. "Tell me at once."

"Your father made a new will the day you left him," said Mary, in a still, small voice. "All his money—on the day you stroked a winning crew at Henley—and nothing if you never did."

In the silence that followed Garry tried to understand and to believe.

"Do you mean that he never told you?" said Mary at last. "Do you mean you *did* promise this—for *me?* Not for *money?* Just for me *only?*"

"Of course I do," said Garry, savagely. "The old man told me nothing. He wouldn't. He wasn't that kind. If he made a will like that he'd mean me not to know till after I'd done it. There's probably a clause in the will to say I wasn't to be told."



"'TELL ME WHAT ON EARTH YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT,' SAID HE. 'TELL ME AT ONCE.'"

Mary sighed just once. It was a sigh of utter and uncounted joy. "Didn't you wonder why I never wrote? Why I never came to you and found you out? Don't you see, Garry? I thought you knew, and then you came to me and said you were going to do it for *me*, when you weren't at all really—you were just going to do it for money."

Garry turned and beckoned to the little professor.

"This little man will tell you," said he. "He knows all I know. I told him two years ago. He'll tell you."

"Oh, there isn't any need," said Mary, "if you say you didn't know. That's enough."

Suddenly she smiled.

"It's been a long time waiting."

Garry put out his hand involuntarily, as if he were reaching for the prize, then drew it back. A sudden step had sounded behind him. He turned. The little professor stood obediently at his elbow.

Garry made a threatening gesture.

"Oh, go away," said he. "Go away, you silly little man."

The little professor stared.

"Well, I'm blowed!" said he. "I thought I was going to be kissed."

The Price of a House

By J. J. BELL

ILLUSTRATED BY W. E. WEBSTER

MR. MAURICE FRAMPTON came out of the new station, at which one alighted for the new garden suburb, and turned into the new road leading to the new house of which he was the owner. There were other new houses, but so new that they were not yet ready for occupation. Consequently the foot traffic on the road was never great. At the moment it was limited to the shiny boots of Mr. Frampton and the shabby ones of a tradesman-looking person who walked, or, rather, slouched, a dozen yards in advance.

It was a fine spring evening, and, after a pretty good day in the City, Mr. Frampton was returning to his bachelor residence in pretty good spirits. Only those fairly intimately acquainted with Mr. Frampton could understand why so urban a gentleman should have decided to settle in so suburban a neighbourhood. As a matter of fact, Mr. Frampton was not at home every evening, but he was invariably there with a party of guests over the week-end. His house was elegantly appointed within. One of the internal features was the window curtains, so handsome and heavy and nicely-fitting that no ray of light could pass them. Another was a roulette table. By such pleasant, easy, and recreative home employment did Mr. Frampton add to his already "respectable" income.

In the City he was a financier, a term which covers more sins than charity. His thoughts were still in the City as he walked up the unfinished road, this fine spring evening, and in all probability he would never have noticed the individual in front but for an extraordinary happening.

From the clothing of the said individual fell a small object which, striking a stone, gave forth a faint musical clink, spun, rolled a couple of feet, and came to rest, a shining disc. Mr. Frampton had good sight for his five-and-forty years, but he could scarce believe his eyes. It was so long since they had seen a piece of gold. Involuntarily he quickened his pace, and, as he did so, another piece of gold fell from the same quarter, then a third. And the loser slouched onward, obviously unaware.

Mr. Frampton collected the three sovereigns. Though a gambler, he was an honest man, so far as he knew. Certainly he was not to be tempted by a few pounds. Yet the beauty, the feel, both so long unfamiliar, caused him to pause for just three seconds. Then he called :—

"Hold on, my man! You've dropped something."

The man halted and slowly turned. His age might have been thirty. Mr. Frampton thought he had never seen a stupider look, bovine or beery, on a human countenance. But intelligence dawned at the sight of the gold on the grey deerskin. A grimy hand was withdrawn from a shabby jacket and opened, disclosing to view five sovereigns.

"Must be a hole in the —— pocket," was the muttered remark.

"Odd place to carry money, isn't it?" Mr. Frampton observed.

The man glanced at him. "So it is, but, ye see, I was enjoyin' the feel o' them jumpin' out and in my hand as I walked along. Much obliged to ye, sir, I'm sure," he added, politely enough. "Bein' out o' work, I couldn't afford to lose one o' the beauties." He took the three so providentially restored and, laying them beside the others, held out the lot for Frampton's inspection. "Only eight now, which was twelve last week," he said, and then, with an uneasy glance about him, dropped the lot into his hip-pocket. "Yes, sir, I'm greatly obliged to ye, and now I'll be wishin' ye a good night."

"You had better come up to my house and drink a glass of ale," said Frampton, whom the furtive look had not escaped. "I suppose you are looking for work?"

"Thank ye, but I won't drink just now, though I could do wi' a cigarette, if ye don't mind," the man returned, falling into step. "Yes, I was thinkin' o' lookin' for work hereabouts—so much buildin' goin' on—but I came by road and arrived too late to see anybody

to-day. Now I'll take a walk into the country, and maybe come back to-morrow."

"The war stopped building here for a long time; it was only restarted recently. If you like, I'll speak to one or two of the foremen on my way to business in the morning."

"'Twould be kind o' ye, sir," the other replied. "But ye don't know anything about me." Abruptly, in a nervous whisper: "Ye won't tell anybody about them sovereigns!"

"Certainly not. Still, mind you, I'm curious," said Mr. Frampton, smiling. "I haven't seen so much gold for years."

The owner of the sovereigns did not look happy. "It's easy enough to get one changed here and there, but I'd not be showing anyone the crowd, if I could help it," he remarked.

"You showed me the crowd."

"I wasn't thinkin'. But ye've promised not to tell anybody. Mind ye, I didn't steal them sovereigns: I—I only found them."

"Then they're yours, no doubt!" Mr. Frampton gave a sympathetic laugh. "Is there any reason why you should not tell me your name—in case I want to mention it to the foremen?"

"John Maxwell; and I'm sure I don't know why ye should take so much trouble."

Mr. Frampton lightly waved aside the remark. As it happened, he had a use just then for a man not too clever and not too particular.

"Suppose you take that walk into the country," he said, "and call on me on your way back, say, about nine o'clock; and we'll talk things over. Ask for Mr. Frampton."

After some hesitation Maxwell assented. "But ye'll forget about the sovereigns?" he added.

"Don't worry, Maxwell. There's my house—the last on this road," said Frampton, a trifle impatiently. "See you about nine." With a nod he hurried off.

"Don't know that the fellow will be much good after all," he reflected, entering his house.

Yet a surprise was in store for him. It was fated, so it seemed, that "the fellow" should become, not a creature under his thumb, but his equal partner in the biggest operation of his money-chasing career.

Maxwell arrived at the hour appointed, sober and extremely awkward. He looked perfectly miserable in the luxurious smoke-room. But a single bottle of beer had an astonishing effect. The host had ready a number of cautious inquiries respecting the man's past, but before he could begin Maxwell, setting down his tumbler, said:—

"Ye've been that kind to me, Mr. Frampton, I'm goin' to risk tellin' ye about the sovereigns. But first, I will ask ye a question. Suppose ye bought a house and then found money in it—what would ye do?"

"Inform the man who sold me the house, of course," was the prompt reply.

"But suppose it was thousands and thousands o' pounds?"

"What difference would that make?" Frampton coldly demanded. Yet he found his visitor's gaze confoundedly disconcerting.

"And suppose," went on the other, as though he had not heard, "that the man before ye had been a German—a pre-war German?"

Mr. Frampton sat up, then lay back in his chair again. "In that case," he said, "it would be my duty to report it to the authorities."

"Would it now?" said Maxwell, in dull tones of disappointment.

"But I'm wondering whether an ordinary

"HOLD ON, MY MAN! YOU'VE DROPPED SOMETHING."

man like myself would do his duty. What about yourself, Maxwell?" The query was lightly put.

"What's the use o' askin' me, sir? Ye can't even suppose that I had bought the house."

"Am I to suppose that such a house exists?"

Eyeing the sadly-chewed end of his cigar, Maxwell said:—

"Did ye ever hear tell o' a place called Sharmouth?"

"Never was there, but I understand it's on the East Coast, about three hours from London."

"That's it! Well, there's a house on the cliffs, about two miles out from the town—and that's where I got them sovereigns, Mr. Frampton." He brought the coins from his hip, and held them out in his open hand. His other hand, after laying down the cigar, went into a side pocket, fumbled, and came forth again. "And this is what I found them in." He displayed a small bag of fine canvas; boldly printed upon it were the figures, £1,000.

"Ye can see for yourself," he proceeded, handing the bag to his host, "that it's been slit open—the knot o' the string bein' a hard one—in a hurry. Must ha' been in a hurry, since twelve good quids was left in it. I picked it up in the foundations o' the house I've told ye about. . . . If it's not too forward, I could do wi' another bottle o' beer. Talkin's dry work, and I've more to tell."

"Put away your gold," said Frampton, ringing. "Go ahead!"

"If ye don't mind, I'll wait till we're sure o' bein' alone again, and I'll ask ye to make certain that nobody's listenin' at the keyhole."

"It becomes quite thrilling," remarked the host, looking amused.

"That's the word for it," was the solemn rejoinder.

The refreshment having been served, and Maxwell having been assured that all was secret, he resumed:—

"Ye see, sir, the old man that bought the house, a fortnight ago, had a sudden sanitary notion to examine the foundations, but he wasn't fit to do it himself, and I was sent to make a report."

"So the house is not now for sale?"

"More's the pity! If it had been standin' empty, as it was for near five years——"

"Never mind that for the present. Come to the point. Are you hinting at buried treasure, Maxwell?"

Maxwell took a pull at his tumbler, wiped his mouth with the back of his hand, and said:—

"There's hundreds o' bags like the one in your hand—only they're full!"

Mr. Frampton's countenance was slightly flushed.

"And you didn't think," he said, slowly, "of bringing one or two away with you?"

"Steel door!"

"Ah! . . . So the hundreds of full bags are to be imagined!"

"Well, imagined by you, sir; but my eyes ha' seen them, clear enough. There's a little grated slit high up in the door—for fresh air, maybe—and I shone my lamp inside. And there was the bags—hundreds o' them, I swear—all neatly sittin' in rows on steel shelves, the £1,000 on each sorter smilin' a fat smile . . . To think o' them belongin' to a German, too!"

There was silence till Frampton asked: "You are assuming that the old man who has bought the house is unaware of the treasure—if treasure it really is—under his feet?"

"Would he ha' sent me down if he had known about it?"

"True. Still, he may have found it out by now."

"Not likely. I made him satisfied that the foundations was O.K. Anyway, I'm goin' to take another look to-morrow, or next day."

"How will you manage that?"

"I left some o' my tools down there, the last time."

"Intentionally?"

"What's it matter? I expect they'll let me in all right."

"Who is there beside the old man?"

"A girl—his daughter—and a servant. 'Tisn't a big house."

"Do you know anything about the German?"

"Only what I picked up in the town. No doubt some of it's true. 'Tis said he was a spy, and did signalling just before the war, but didn't expect this country could come in. When we declared, he took fright and bolted—some says in a submarine, which somebody thought he saw in the bay at the time. Anyway, he must ha' gone in a hurry, for he took nothin' with him, not even extra clothes. . . . Of course, he took the sovereigns that was in the one bag—I can see him stuffin' all his pockets!"

"You have a fine imagination, Maxwell!" remarked Mr. Frampton, calmly, though his nerves were scarcely so steady as usual. "Now, have you any theory as to why this German was storing gold? Had he the reputation of a miser?"

"Not a bit of it! He spent lots. But he was workin' for his blessed Fatherland, as was many another in the same line—so I've heard. The sovereigns was intended for Germany, which was likely to need all the gold she could get."

The other nodded. The man was more intelligent than he had at first reckoned. In the new circumstances, however, this could not be deemed an objection.

"Well, Maxwell," he said, pleasantly, "and what are you going to do about it?"

Maxwell's face clouded. "What do ye mean, sir? I've put myself in your hands," he said, rather sullenly.

"In other words, you are asking my help."

"Wouldn't it be worth your while?"

"Have you been to anyone else?"

"No, sir. Didn't know who to go to. But when you spoke to me on the road, I sorter felt you was the man for me—no offence intended."

"You have told me a very interesting tale, but you must forgive me if I keep on asking myself the question: 'Is the gold really there?'"

"Come and see for yourself."

"What's that?"

"Rig yourself out same as me, and come and help me to look for my tools."

"Bit of a risk—eh?"

"Hardly any; and if it was a big risk, surely 'twould be worth it. The old man's half blind; the girl—well, she's only a girl, and the servant's just a lump of a woman. . . . Yes, that's the idea! Come and see for yourself, Mr. Frampton."

The financier's restraint gave way.

"Hanged if I don't!" he exclaimed. "But I must know how I stand," he said, presently, "in the event of the gold being there."

"Halves," said Maxwell.

"The expenses may be great," came the objection.

"I must have my half, Mr. Frampton."

"Well, well, so be it," agreed Frampton, reflecting that, after all, he held the whip.

Their talk went on for another hour, and then Maxwell took his departure.

Two days later they met on the road, a mile out of Sharmouth.

"HE DISPLAYED A SMALL BAG OF FINE CANVAS; BOLDLY PRINTED UPON IT WERE THE FIGURES, £1,000."

"Am I anything like the genuine article?" was the financier's rather anxious inquiry.

"Oh, ye'll do, so long as ye keep your mouth shut—no offence intended."

It was a grey afternoon; the prospect was a bleak one. As they approached the house, an old square building, somewhat grim and forbidding in its bare solitude, Mr. Frampton began

to feel that this was a spot wherein anything might happen.

They passed up the weedy walk of a neglected garden, and at the stout door Maxwell whispered, ere he knocked: "Leave it all to me."

A middle-aged servant opened promptly, and made no difficulty about their entering. In fact, she said nothing at all.

Presently they were among the ancient foundations.

"Now," whispered Maxwell, directing his light upon a grey door that looked as if it covered the mouth of a cave, "go and see for yourself."

Mr. Frampton stumbled over to the door. He was fairly tall, and the grated slit mentioned by Maxwell was just on a level with his eyes. He had brought an electric torch, and soon its rays were flooding what he took to be a chamber excavated in the rock beyond the foundations.

Then he drew a deep breath. Maxwell had neither dreamed nor invented his tale! In orderly rows were the plump canvas bags, each bearing its cheerful imprint — £1,000! And his keen eye seized on something that Maxwell's had probably missed—a bag with a flaw in it, so that it was in danger of bursting, and betrayed the nature of its contents—the contour of coins and, yes, a glint of gold itself!

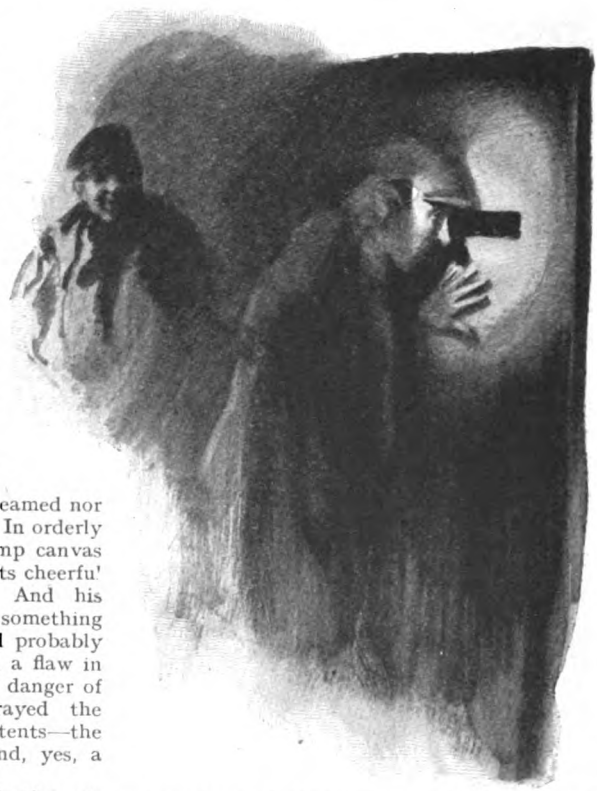
There was perspiration on Mr. Frampton's brow, fever in his gaze.

He began to count the bags . . . One hundred and sixty eight — and there were shelves not within the range of his vision. Great Heaven! the chamber must contain somewhere about three hundred thousand pounds!

"Halves, mind ye!" said a voice in his ear, and he started violently.

"Of course, Maxwell, of course," he replied, recovering himself. "There was no need to remind me of that."

"Perhaps not," said Maxwell. "But the sight o' them bags might make many a man forget a little thing like a promise. No offence intended, but I'm takin' no chances." And he gave the other a glimpse of a revolver. "Now we'd best be goin'. Carry them tools, please, and don't speak a word till we're out o' the house."



"THE SLIT WAS JUST ON A LEVEL WITH HIS EYES. HE HAD BROUGHT AN ELECTRIC TORCH, AND SOON ITS RAYS WERE FLOODING WHAT HE TOOK TO BE A CHAMBER EXCAVATED IN THE ROCK

He did not, himself, speak a word until they were half a mile down the road. Then he put the blunt question:—

"What are ye goin' to do?"

"There's only one thing I can do—buy the house."

"Oh!" said Maxwell, blankly.

"What else have you to suggest?"

"Don't know that I've anything. . . Only, it looks as if you would have all the power and me none. But I suppose I ha' got to trust ye."

"You have," said Mr. Frampton, with something of his old assurance. "Now we're going to part for the present," he proceeded. "What are your plans?"

"Stay in the town yonder and keep an eye on the house. Ye can write to me at the post-office."

"Very well. I'll get to work at once. If the deal takes time, it won't be my fault."

"How much will ye offer the old man?"

"I've got to find out first what he paid. By the way, do you want some money to go on with?"

"No. Nothin' but my half share, thank ye all the same."

"Good-bye, then. Don't watch the house too closely." And Mr. Frampton walked off to catch his train.

Within forty-eight hours he had learned that the new owner, Mr. William Palfrey, had paid one thousand four hundred pounds for the house and furniture. "Might have been worse," was his comment.

That night's mail carried the following epistle to Mr. William Palfrey:—

> DEAR SIR,—I trust you will not regard this as an unpardonable intrusion. A client and friend just invalided home from foreign service learns with dismay that the house, which he has long desired to possess, has been purchased by you. It may be, I will readily admit, a sick man's fancy—obsession, if you will—but he has convinced himself that the sole hope of curing his nervous

malady depends on his being able to reside in that house. He has persuaded me to write to you, which I do with all diffidence, offering the sum of two thousand pounds for immediate possession of the house and its contents. He is, I may say, a wealthy man, and has already placed the sum named in my charge.

May I hope for your consideration and an early reply ?

Faithfully yours,
MAURICE FRAMPTON.

The early reply, at least, was not denied him. It ran thus :—

Mr. William Palfrey is obliged to Mr, Maurice Frampton for his letter and the offer contained therein, and begs to state that, while sympathizing with Mr. Frampton's client, he is not disposed to vacate the house, which he, too, long desired to possess, and which he finds most suitable for the retired life he needs.

" Damn ! " remarked the recipient. " Looks as if he had made up his mind." Frampton, however, did not believe in minds made up irrevocably. It all depended on the weight of the golden lever.

Accordingly, and forthwith, he dispatched a quite pathetic letter, increasing his client and friend's offer by five hundred pounds.

Mr. William Palfrey's response was prompt and courteous, but just as discouraging as before.

Without delay, Frampton offered three thousand pounds. Rejected also !

" Curse the old profiteer ! " the financier observed, a little unreasonably, perhaps, and fell to wondering whether honest burglary were not the only hope, after all. But he was no adventurer where his skin was concerned.

He wrote that the poor desperate invalid was now willing to pay four thousand pounds.

Two days later came a letter with the Sharmouth postmark, yet not in the now almost familiar shaky, spidery handwriting. He read it with growing excitement :—

DEAR SIR,—My father is not so well to-day and is unable to write. He desires me to decline, with his thanks, your last kind offer. May I add that I deeply regret his attitude in the matter, and would give much to see this house disposed of. Its purchase on his part was a mistake. The sea air does not suit him at all, and it is painful to me that he should be risking his delicate health and, at the same time, I fear, depriving your poor ill client of a possible means of recovery. For myself, I will only say that I find the place too deadly dull for words.

But I write this solely for my father's sake, and beg that you will treat it confidentially. You say that your client is wealthy. Well, my father is not, and I feel that if the offer were further increased—it might have to be largely increased—he might be induced to do as you wish. I think that if you came to see him, showed him the money, and were prepared to settle everything on the spot, he would give in.

In the circumstances, I believe you will pardon this liberty.

Yours truly,
LEONORA L. PALFREY.

" Now or never ! " muttered Mr. Frampton, the gambling spirit thoroughly roused.

He dispatched a telegram, called on his bankers, and caught the train, all within the space of one hour. He arrived at Sharmouth early in the afternoon, lunched, and took a cab, hoping he might not be seen by Mr. John Maxwell on the way. The word " halves " may have been troubling his mind, but decidedly not his conscience. Maxwell would receive a share, of course, but it would be no more than seemed good in the eyes of the financier.

However, the house had still to be purchased, and by the time Mr. Frampton arrived at the door the optimistic effects of the luncheon champagne had somewhat evaporated.

Entering a gloomy, poorly-furnished hall, he was conducted along a short passage and shown into a study of sorts, indifferently lighted.

In his dressing-gown, a man with a long grey beard and untidy grey hair, his eyes protected by darkened glasses, sat at a writing-table. By the fire sat a girl whom Frampton mentally appraised as " uncommon handsome."

She rose, returning his bow, and said :—

" Father, this is Mr. Frampton, who——"

" Yes, yes," the old man interrupted, testily, as though roused from meditation. Then, in a more genial tone : " Be seated, sir. I received your telegram, and regret that I could not reply in time to save you a tiresome journey."

" But not a vain one, I must still hope," Mr. Frampton gravely but pleasantly returned, taking the chair proffered by Miss Palfrey, at some distance from the table.

Mr. Palfrey shook his grey head. " The house is not for sale," he muttered.

" You will permit me to state my case, as it now stands ? " said the visitor.

" Considering the journey you have taken, I cannot forbid you ; but I warn you that you will but waste your breath. I would not part with the house for twice the sum you have already offered."

Mr. Frampton sighed. " Still," he said, " I must do my duty by my client. Mr. Palfrey, my client has worked himself into a deplorable condition over the matter. I saw his medical adviser last night. There is no doubt whatever that his recovery hangs on the satisfying of this one overwhelming desire. But even my client's wealth is not unlimited. He cannot go on increasing his offer indefinitely—and the offer I am about to make must be taken as final." The speaker paused and cleared his throat.

" Sir," he resumed, with emotion, " for the immediate possession of this house and its contents, I am empowered to offer you the sum of ten thousand pounds."

" Ah ! " murmured Mr. Palfrey, while an inarticulate exclamation escaped the girl.

"BY THE FIRE SAT A GIRL WHOM FRAMPTON MENTALLY APPRAISED AS 'UNCOMMON HANDSOME.' SHE ROSE, RETURNING HIS BOW, AND SAID: 'FATHER, THIS IS MR. FRAMPTON.'"

"My client insisted on my bringing that sum with me—in Bank of England notes of one hundred pounds each." From his breast pockets Mr. Frampton produced two bundles. "If the title-deeds are not at hand, my client will accept your simple acknowledgment for the present."

"Dear me, dear me!" said the old man, helplessly, his chin on his chest.

The girl stepped forward. "Father, you will accept," she said, softly. "You cannot refuse." She turned to the visitor. "How soon should we have to go?" she asked.

"It is so urgent," he replied, "that I must beg of you to vacate within twenty-four hours from now."

"It can be done," she answered. "Father, what do you say?"

Mr. Palfrey threw out his hands. "So be it!" he cried, wearily. "For your sake, Leonora, I accept the price."

Five minutes later Mr. Frampton rose to go. "I can just catch the express," he said, after gratefully refusing refreshment. "My client cannot have the good news a moment too soon."

Leonora went with him to the door, and watched until the cab was out of sight. Then she returned to the study.

"The car will be here immediately," she remarked as she entered, smiling.

She did not appear in the least astonished at what she saw——

A nice-looking young man engaged in executing a cheerful dance upon a wig, beard, and smoked glasses.

At a second glance you would probably have identified him with a person of the name of John Maxwell.

CHIVALRY UP-TO-DATE.

Correct attitude assumed by a grateful rural policeman towards a lady who has released him from the ferocious attentions of a mad dog.

Monumental kindness of a Scotch visitor to London in breaking the fall of a victim to vertigo.

Courteous consideration of party of old beaux. Throwing their weight into the prevention of a serious motor accident.

Iron nerve of senior members of The Alpine Club in preserving one of the few surviving domestic helps.

The Kiddies' Holiday at the Seashore.

By C. H. TWELVETREES.

"Help! Help! a shark!"

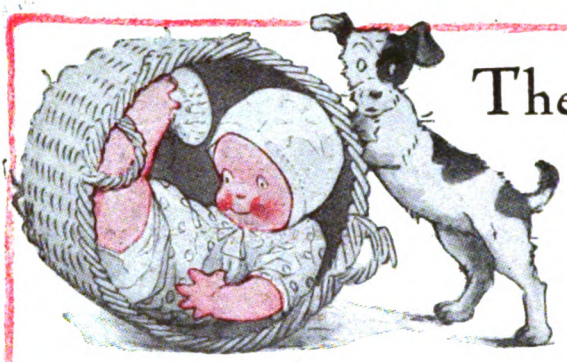
—But the shark was only father coming up for air.

Swimming taught in one lesson.

Uncle John couldn't run or play games, but he made a splendid raft.

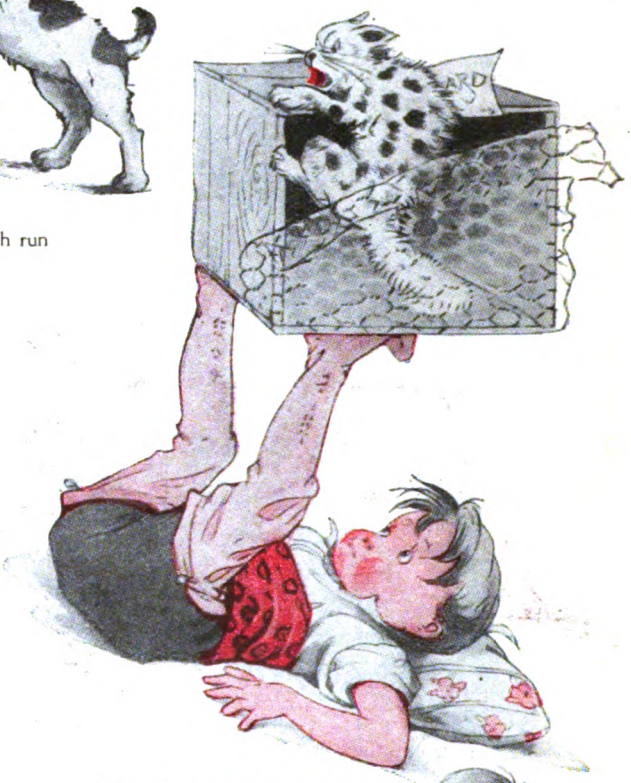
"P'r'aps it's a sub-reen or a Zep-er-leen."

The Kiddies Have a



The greatest roller-act on earth run by dog-power alone.

Open-mouthed and wide-eyed, the audience gazes at the show, amazed at its wonders.



The only leopard in captivity makes a hairbreadth escape in full view of the audience.

Here, ladies and gentlemen, we have a huge exhibit of wild animals which have won service stripes by many perilous deeds.

A River Dream

by Stella Callaghan

Illustrated by Freyer Evans

I.

It was unspeakably old, shabby, small, and paintless, and it lay in a little bend of the Thames, almost hidden by the willows that bent over it as though they would cover its decrepitude from the caustic comments of the gay river craft that passed it far out in the broad stream. But to Meg it was a houseboat, and her own.

She was the owner of a houseboat on the Thames, a house of dreams on a dream river. It was true that it was little more than a flat barge with a hut imposed thereon; it had a door in the middle leading straight into a small room which held a rickety table, a cupboard, and two chairs, and leading from it a still smaller cabin with a bunk in it, that she proudly called her bedroom, and on the other side a strange lean-to arrangement, in which one could not stand upright, with a cooking stove and a shelf.

And the roof was flat and had a little rail round it, and you got up by a rickety ladder from the side. Moored behind was an ancient and leaky dinghy, wherein Meg rowed from the landing-stage by the station, half a mile away, into the house of dreams every Saturday afternoon, and away again early every Monday morning. For Meg was queen of her domain only for the week-ends—the rest of the week she worked in London and dreamed about it.

All through the week the river called her with its silent voice and green and silver beauty, and at week-ends she came to it, tingling with excitement and awed with the wonder of a dream fulfilled. In such a state one does not see the shabbiness, the need of paint, nor heed discomfort. It is the possession of a thing desired that makes its beauty. The little legacy that had made it hers had been fairy gold.

Early one glorious July morning, with a misty sun giving promise of great heat to follow, Meg stood on the deck of her beloved and dilapidated houseboat, dressed in her swimming suit, with hands outstretched, poised shivering for her first dive into the cool water. She always stood a minute or two, shivering with something between reluctance and longing, before she could make up her mind. Consequently she did not see a dark head moving in response to slow, leisurely movements a little way out in the stream coming down towards her. The owner of the dark head, however, caught sight of her poised there, and of the little half-hidden houseboat on which she stood, and turned on to his side to get a better view.

"By Jove," he thought, "a real river nymph; not one of those imitation Sunday afternoon affairs but the real thing." And he continued to float very silently where he could best observe her.

So like some river bird suddenly set free she swooped swiftly down to her dive, and the waters parted with a cool gurgling plop.

She was a beautiful swimmer, strong, neat, and graceful, as befits one who is queen of her own domain, and she swam as though in her natural element, part of the river life and early morning, one with the little moor-hens and the bending willows. And the whole scene went to the head of the young man floating in midstream.

"Hang it all," he thought, subconsciously, "the beastly stream is carrying me down with it, and I'm not as strong as I was, but I must stop and watch her."

Then, seeing a willow which stretched its branches with inviting friendliness out into the deep, he turned and swam to the nearest branch and held on. It was then he had the impulse and inspiration of his life. For very soon Meg, in the ecstasy of joy in her early morning swim, came out beyond her little bay and lay paddling gently on her back, looking up into the misty sun, and he, seizing the impulse, called out rather breathlessly:—

"I say!"

It was a nice pleasant voice, with a hint of

irresponsible friendliness in it, and Meg started, righted herself, and looked round to see whence it came.

She saw him there hanging on to the willow bough. She swam a little nearer.

"What's the matter?" she called out. She had a very musical voice that went with the lapping of the waters on the reeds. "Do you want any help?"

Of one inspiration, to the lucky few, is born another.

"Well, I do rather," he admitted on the spur of the moment. "You see, I'm a bit crocked up, and I've come farther down the stream than I intended, and—well, I was wondering whether you would let me hang on to your houseboat and rest a bit."

It was a shot in the dark. There might be ten people in the houseboat, though it hardly looked as if there would be room for even one more. Yet it was unlikely she would be here alone. He was prepared for two or three girl friends, perhaps—anyway, it was just an inspiration, and, like all Irishmen, he believed in the luck of the moment.

She hesitated the fraction of a second. Then, "Supposing he was a wounded soldier, and I didn't let him come," she thought. "I should never forgive myself."

"Why, of course you may," she said. "Let me help you—just put your hand on my shoulder."

Now I'm sorry to say that our young man had never felt better since that piece of shell had knocked him out over in France. But having been an invalid for so long, the *rôle* came very glibly to him. He thought it a very attractive shoulder, firm to rest on, but he did not give her much work. A few strokes brought them to the houseboat, and they clambered up on to its low-sided deck. Then he turned his humorous, pleading eyes on her.

"I say, don't let me keep you from your bathe," was what he said, but the eyes said something quite different.

I don't know whether it was the eyes or the voice that she answered, but I think it was the eyes that made her feel suddenly shy.

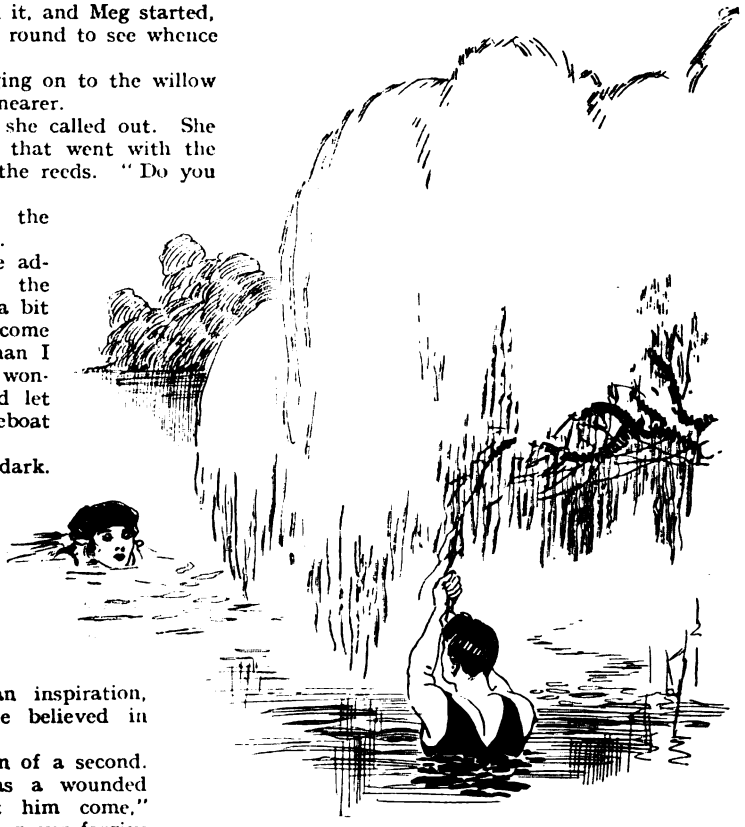
"Oh, I never stay in long the first time," she said, "but I go in and out the whole morning."

"Just like a moor-hen," he said, quite gravely. "Nothing else could be out on the river quite so early in the morning."

"You're out."

"Oh, I'm a crank and a crock," he told her.

"Wounded?" she said, sympathetically. She knew from his brown face and the look in his eyes that he was one of those who have come back.



"SHE SAW HIM HANGING ON TO THE WILLOW BOUGH. 'WHAT'S THE MATTER?' SHE CALLED OUT."

"Yes—shell splinter; it's taken the devil of a time to get it out, but I'm practically all right now."

"I don't believe you ought to be out swimming at all," she said, severely. "How far have you come?"

"Oh, I'm in one of the houseboats round the bend," he answered. "I shall be able to get back all right presently."

"One minute!" said Meg, suddenly, and dashed, all wet as she was, into the little cabin. In a few minutes a heavenly smell of coffee pervaded the air. Then she returned with a large bath-towel. "I think you had better have some of my coffee before you go back," she said, rather shyly. "If you will stay a few minutes. It's a long way to the bend—and put this round you so as not to catch cold."

She came back in a few moments with two cups of steaming coffee on a tray, still in her wet swimming suit but with a bath-cloak thrown over her. Her complete unselfconsciousness was with her as she came, adding charm to her warm olive complexion and brown sparkling eyes.

"There!" she said, rather breathlessly. It was the first time she had dispensed hospitality from her own houseboat and she was rather proud of the possession of two cups and a tray.

"It's perfect," said the young man, gaily, and though his lips tasted the coffee his eyes included many things besides.

"Do you mean to say you live here alone?" he asked, presently.

"For the week-ends, yes," she answered. Then, with a deep breath, "Isn't it fun?"

His eyes took in the incredibly shabby and ancient erection on the indescribable barge and came back to the girl so full of life and joy who lived there.

"I think it's very wonderful of you—and tremendously sporting. But aren't you ever afraid?"

"Afraid? What of—the moor-hens?" she asked, adding inconsequently, "The darlings."

He laughed. It was a particularly jolly laugh, full of good humour and *bonne camaraderie*. "No, other things—rats—storms—pirates—and so on."

"I don't mind rats. I was brought up by the river, you see. If there's a storm I get into my bunk and stick under the clothes until it's over—and I haven't met any pirates."

"You are lucky," he said, with immense gravity. "I almost wish I was a pirate."

"You would have to have a belt and a pistol and a feathered hat and a skull and crossbones."

"But I should hoist my flag over your houseboat and say, 'Once aboard the lugger, ha-ha!' and there we should be."

"It doesn't sound very alarming. I don't think my houseboat would be able to put out very far to sea."

"You are right there—it's a wonderful affair," he said, looking over it very solemnly.

"Isn't it?" she said, enthusiastically and guileless of satire. "Of course my great wish is to give it a good coat of paint, but I never have time at the week-ends. I'm too busy enjoying it all."

He looked thoughtful a moment.

"Yes, a coat, or even two coats, of paint would do it no harm. I think it must be really getting rather cold without its coat."

"Oh, don't laugh at it. It's a darling boat, and I just love it even as it is, but, of course, it must look funny to anyone else."

"Do you really never come down except for week-ends?"

"I never get away. I work in a horrid old office, and I live in a Hostel for Women Workers all the week."

"Good God!" said the young man. "That keeps you safe. But the week-ends you escape."

"Yes," she said, with a sigh of joy.

"And play at being a moor-hen in the early mornings. What do you do the rest of your Sunday?"

She smiled at him.

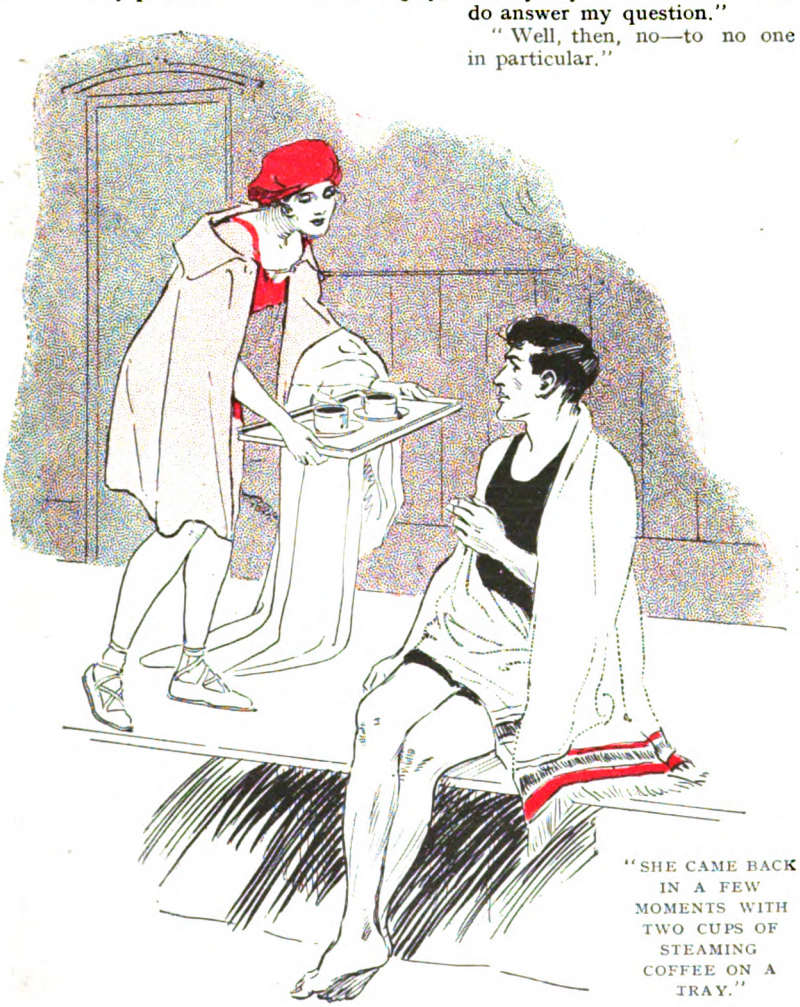
"Go on playing at being a moor-hen, then cook my lunch, go to sleep, read a book, and write letters."

"To someone in particular?"

"You are inquisitive," she laughed.

"Of course I'm inquisitive. You interest me strangely, as they say in novelettes. But do answer my question."

"Well, then, no—to no one in particular."



"SHE CAME BACK IN A FEW MOMENTS WITH TWO CUPS OF STEAMING COFFEE ON A TRAY."

He sighed with pretended relief.

"That's all right, then," he said. "It would be so distressing to think of you living in a Hostel for Women Workers all the week and then coming down here on Sundays, only to dream the time away by writing to Someone in Particular. It would be so obvious and I didn't think really you would do the obvious thing."

"Perhaps not—the obvious thing would be to paint the houseboat."

"What colour would you paint it, if you ever did begin it?" he asked, idly.

"Oh, blue," she said, at once. "Just that shade of deep sky-blue that would look so lovely under the willows, and the windows, of course, would be white, and I should have purple curtains and cushions."

He made mental notes.

"Yes, that's a jolly colour-scheme," he agreed. "I know just the blue you mean—like those flowers—what d'you call them?—delphiniums."

"That's it, exactly; delphiniums in the evening," she said, enthusiastically, and thought how nice it was of him to understand.

And so the time passed, and they did not know how swiftly it had gone, nor remember how unconventional a morning they were spending. For on the river in the early morning there is no time and no convention, only a very delicious unity with things natural and simple.

At last the young man seemed to come back to a more mundane frame of mind.

"Heavens!" he said. "They will think I'm drowned and send search-parties out. How awful!"

"Are you strong enough to swim back?" she asked, anxiously.

"Strong enough!" he began, indignantly. "Why, I can swim——" Then he suddenly remembered his *rôle* of invalid which had been the beginning of it all, and changed his voice. "Why, yes, I think I can manage it easily now, thanks to this jolly rest and your wonderful coffee."

"TIME PASSED AND THEY DID NOT KNOW HOW SWIFTLY IT HAD GONE, NOR REMEMBER HOW UNCONVENTIONAL A MORNING THEY WERE SPENDING."

"Are you sure? Because there's the dinghy," she said, shyly.

"The dinghy?" He pretended to put up glasses in order to be able to see it. "It's a wonderful dinghy, but I think I'm safer *in* the water, you know. If——"

"If?"

"If you'd swim with me just as far as the bend," he pleaded. "It would be such a beautiful send-off to your morning's kindness."

"I'll come," said Meg, gaily, "if you'll race me. I'll give you a start, you know," with much arrogance.

"Will you, indeed? All right—the first willow at the bend, then."

He stood up, disengaged the towel with an air of grace, and hung it up on the corner of the cabin.

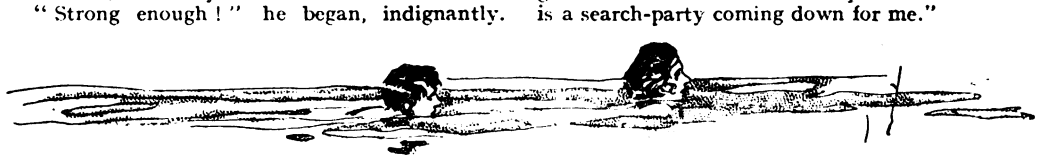
"Well, here goes," he said, diving off; but, coming to the surface quickly, turned on his side to watch her. She stood there a moment, the bath-wrap discarded, straight and slim in her swimming suit, poised for the dive.

A thrill went through him; she was so gloriously young, so full of life, of such a sweet face and figure.

Then the waters parted with a plop, and she came up beside him.

Side by side they drove through the water, perfect swimmers both, but the mastery was to her by half a length.

"This time you've beaten me, but wait," he said, when they had got breath. "And, good heavens"—he looked up-stream—"there is a search-party coming down for me."



"SIDE BY SIDE THEY DROVE THROUGH THE WATER."

Obeying some instinct she dived suddenly beneath the water.

"*Au revoir*, moor-hen," he called, softly, and turned to swim with long powerful strokes up-stream.

And Meg returned to the dilapidated little houseboat and found that it was somehow a different place. The peace, the seclusion, her exclusive atmosphere, had been invaded. There was a sense of something different, but something not altogether unpleasant.

II.

In the silent hours of the early morning, when only the moor-hens and the water-rats were there to see, day after day a punt slid down-stream and moored up alongside the little hidden barge with a hut on it, which is the way those who do not understand would describe the dream of Meg's heart. And from the punt, which was laden with large paint-pots and various appliances, two men dressed in overalls would emerge and start work, one with sundry grunts and groans and much criticism, the other with a gay whistling of little Irish love-songs, interspersed with startling curses. And behold by the Friday morning the dilapidated, unspeakably shabby boat was transformed into a thing of beauty in shining delphinium blue.

"It's getting along, McMurphy," said the tall, dark young man, stepping back with pride to survey the wonderful work.

"Well, sir, I don't know—there's the white work round the port-holes to do yet, and that there white line round the gunwale—she don't seem to come up like what I'd like."

"McMurphy, that was my special bit. You scoundrel, you're jealous of it."

"Comes of your not being a painter, sir," said McMurphy, unabashed. "But I don't say you're not coming along fine. Now, if you had been at it like me, man and boy, till this 'ere war came and took me like——"

"Oh, you're a genius, McMurphy. Curse this white brush, it's gone and got into the blue paint. I'd never have done the job without you—like many a time in France—what?"

"Well, I'm not saying I can't turn my 'and to a job if it comes my way," said McMurphy, complacently. "But there, sir, all said an' done, I wouldn't be 'ere at all but for you."

"Oh, rot; you'd have pulled out somehow. And we've made a fine job of this old barge, anyway. We've camouflaged her so that her owner won't know her. Just the right shade of blue, too—'blue as delphiniums in the evening.'"

And the young man's eyes grew suddenly dreamy and he seemed lost in thought.

McMurphy continued his painting with the usual grunts.

"Beg pardon, sir," he said, suddenly, "but what about the inside of this 'ere craft?"

Carleton came out of his dreams. "The inside, McMurphy? I—I'm afraid we can't do anything there, can we? You see, it doesn't belong to me, and I haven't got a key or anything."

McMurphy paused in his painting and shambled up to the door in the middle and examined the lock with the eye of an expert.

"'Twouldn't be no trouble for me to get that open, sir," he said. "An' if you wants to make a job of it——"

"McMurphy, you scoundrel, we should be housebreaking."

"Well, in a manner, sir, I suppose we should be, but it seems a downright shame for to leave the inside all crying out for a coat of paint, and she so smart outside an' all."

It was the great quality of McMurphy that he liked to see a job through. It was the very quality that had drawn him to Carleton in France, where as sergeant and captain they had seen many awkward jobs through together and stranger ones than the

"BEG PARDON, SIR, BUT WHAT ABOUT THE INSIDE OF THIS 'ERE CRAFT?"

painting of a houseboat hidden under the willows on River Thames.

Carleton peered in at the little window and then turned, his Irish eyes ablaze with laughter. "It would be a rag, McMurphy," he said.

"'Twould make a proper job of it, sir," said McMurphy, persistently. "'Twouldn't take no time to put a wash over her little walls.'

"HANG IT, THERE MUST BE A CUSHION IN THIS CONFOUNDED BARGE. YES, HERE WE ARE!"

If Carleton had said he wanted the willows themselves painted purple he would have been equally ready in his unperturbed surly devotion. He did not even know who owned the little barge, though he guessed there was a "skirt in it." After all, Carleton himself did not know much more—only a laughing face, full of the joy of living, and a slim straight figure had haunted him persistently every hour since that early morning.

Carleton made up his mind.

"You old rogue, get your paint and brushes—we'll do it," he said.

Saturday morning early the punt moored up for the last time alongside the little houseboat, now wonderful in delphinium blue and white, and the two men on their hands and knees scrubbed the deck and removed all traces of their week's work. Within everything was spotlessly white and scrubbed fresh, and in the little windows hung curtains of a deep shade of purple.

Yet Carleton, walking round and surveying his handiwork, was not satisfied.

"Anything wrong, sir?" grunted McMurphy, as he tipped a pail of water overboard into the river.

"Paint's all right, McMurphy, but it doesn't look finished, somehow. What is it?"

"Well, sir, beggin' pardon, sir, it's that rug and that old chair, sir, and after your own boat up the river—they want renewvoratin', that's what it is."

Carleton looked round.

"You're a sound man, McMurphy," he said. "You are absolutely inspired. One more trip up in the old punt, then. There's time before breakfast, and, anyway, I've no one coming down this week-end, thank God."

He swung into the punt as he spoke and McMurphy clambered in after him and cast off.

"She may come before we get back," said Carleton, in a panic, speaking his thoughts aloud.

But McMurphy, solid and unperturbed as ever, comforted him greatly. "If so be that the lady is coming by train, sir," he said, "there ain't none from nowhere before midday."

"McMurphy, you're the one shining star in a dark sky, but you know too much."

"I don't know nothin', sir, 'cept what my wits tell me."

They came up to the exquisite large houseboat which Carleton had taken for his summer abode while on sick-leave. He stepped on board quietly, for he was secretly a little afraid of his excellent but prim housekeeper.

"How much can we take on board?" he asked McMurphy, in a feverish whisper.

"Don't overdo it, sir," advised the sage one. "Just one of those arm-chairs and a rug, and maybe a cushion or two."

Carleton seized a couple of small rugs from the saloon. "They'll fit and they're just the colour; now cushions—hang it, there must be a cushion in this confounded barge. Yes, here we are!"

"What about some flowers, sir?" grunted McMurphy. "Women like a sight of flowers about them, though I don't hold with them myself."

"McMurphy, you're more than a genius, you're It. When I marry I shall leave everything for you to do, except choose the girl."

"Mebbe she's chosen **already**, sir," grunted McMurphy.

"Maybe," said Carleton, absently, and was about to fall into a reverie again.

"Time's going on, sir," warned McMurphy.

"Good God, yes! Get on with the job. Here, these flowers."

"SHE WAS VERY NEAR TEARS AS SHE PULLED HARD TOWARDS THE HOUSEBOAT."

He seized a glorious bowl of roses and presently the punt slipped down-stream again, carrying a strange lump in the middle, to which McMurphy, who was not handy with the pole, clung in trepidation.

An hour later the transformation of the once unspeakably shabby little houseboat was complete. The lock which McMurphy had removed was replaced, the paint glittered, the decks shone; and within the little cabin was all that the heart of a maid could desire.

Then Carleton lost his nerve.

"I shall never face meeting her. She'll guess and she'll be furious or she'll be frightened, or perhaps it's all wrong and she won't like it. I've trespassed, I've housebroke, I've been confoundedly impertinent. I'm going to London."

He announced his intention to McMurphy, who was frankly disgusted.

"Well, sir, who'd have thought of your going and losing your nerve like that? I shouldn't have thought it of you, sir."

"You don't know women, McMurphy," said Carleton, gloomily.

"Mebbe not, sir," grunted McMurphy.

Carleton punted back to his houseboat, found he couldn't touch any breakfast or read the papers or enjoy his smoke.

"I've gone and done it," he thought, with an Irishman's plunge from the heights to the depths. "I simply can't face her."

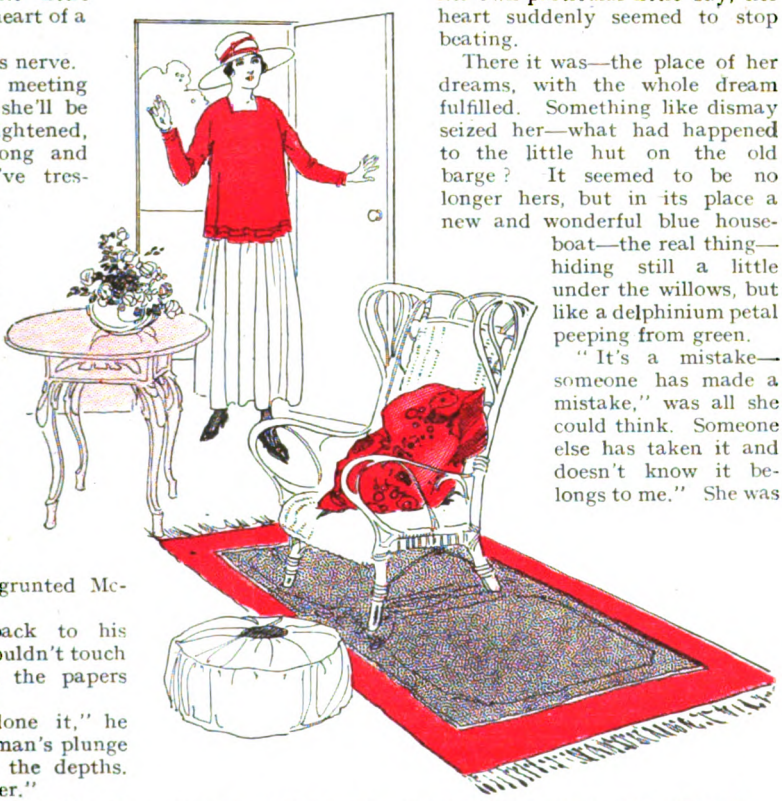
He caught the early train to London. . . .

At two o'clock that afternoon Meg stepped from the landing-stage into the dilapidated dinghy, plumped her case alongside her and her small parcel of stores, and proceeded to row up-stream. If there had been a certain subconscious excitement in her throughout the week it was not apparent as she came to the cool peace of the river, and there was no envy in her as gay boats went by and laughing girls with young men in attendance gathered on the landing-stage with hampers and cushions.

Then as she came round the bend, and so to her own particular little bay, her heart suddenly seemed to stop beating.

There it was—the place of her dreams, with the whole dream fulfilled. Something like dismay seized her—what had happened to the little hut on the old barge? It seemed to be no longer hers, but in its place a new and wonderful blue houseboat—the real thing—hiding still a little under the willows, but like a delphinium petal peeping from green.

"It's a mistake—someone has made a mistake," was all she could think. Someone else has taken it and doesn't know it belongs to me." She was



"HALF SUFFOCATING WITH EXCITEMENT SHE OPENED THE DOOR."

"IN A TWINKLING HE WAS HELPING HER ON TO HER OWN DECK."

very near tears as she pulled hard towards it, almost choking in her agitation.

"They sha'n't have it," was her next determined thought. "It's mine—but, oh, it's just the blue I always dreamed about—and the white windows and purple curtains."

A few desperate strokes brought her alongside, and a hesitation seized her. Supposing someone—some new tenant was there? She screwed up her courage.

"It's mine," she said to herself, firmly, and stepped on board.

Half suffocating with excitement she opened the door.

"Oh!"

There were her own things—it was all right then, it *was* hers still—but the new paint, the glorious rugs, the cushioned arm-chair, the gorgeous bowl of roses that stood on an exquisite tablecloth! It was her own but transformed as her dreams would have transformed it.

The wonder of it came into her without comprehension, and she sank helplessly into the chair.

Someone was hiding in the willows. He was peering, with the skill of one practised in scouting, through the trees into the little window.

Suddenly he saw the little figure inside jump up and seize one of the cushions and hug it to herself; then, flinging it down, dart to the bowl of roses, and, bending over, kiss them.

"An' that's wasted, that is," McMurphy grumbled. "Why isn't the Cap'en here? She's a pretty bit o' work, she is, so slim and all."

Then he chuckled and slipped back through the bushes, with the silence of a practised scout.

Meg slept that night in a wondering dream, a dream that woke her very early in the morning and tempted her into the cool waters before the river was awake. There was an expectancy, a thrill in the air, but she bathed alone, and no smooth dark head popped up in the water beside her; not that she expected it to—of course not! How could the transformation of the little houseboat have anything to do with it? But yet—a woman's intuition is seldom wrong, though she is often too frightened to whisper it out loud.

The day passed in a dream—but it was a solitary dream.

III.

THE next week-end Meg drew up to the houseboat with a half dread of what might have happened to it during the week. This time she found flower-boxes all round the flat roof, filled with glorious mauve and purple stocks and white tobacco plants. Also in the little cabin the rose-bowl had been done with fresh wonderful roses. The week-end after that she found a delicious little supper prepared of cold salmon, a wonderful salad, and French *patisserie*. Also two comfortable luxurious deck-chairs had appeared on her roof.

"It is faery," she said to herself, in a kind of wondering solemnity. But her woman's heart knew that somehow the fairies were working through something very human and delightful, someone who thought of her. The young man who had swum to her through the freshness of the morning she saw not at all.

The week-end after that she was unexpectedly given a Saturday morning off. She took an early train to the riverside station and arrived there before lunch. And she laughed a little low laugh as she put off in the dinghy. Then her heart thumped as she caught sight of a long punt lying alongside her houseboat.

"It will break the spell," she whispered,

"'THE OLD VILLAIN—HE HAS MAROONED ME,' SAID CARLETON, WATCHING THE PUNT TURNING THE BEND."

half-fearfully to herself. But deep down she knew that a spell had been woven that could not break. She went on.

As the dinghy drew into the little bay the dialogue that ensued was short.

"Look out, sir; she's coming."

There was no time for more. They were caught just as McMurphy was putting the finishing touches to a little bookcase he was hanging on the wall.

"We're done," muttered the Captain.

"Fair copped," echoed McMurphy. Then he turned with the imperturbability of his nature and drove the last nail into the wall of the cabin, leaving the Captain to face the situation on the tiny deck.

"'Is job," chuckled McMurphy.

The little dinghy drew alongside, at first with strokes sure and true and then hesitating and uncertain.

"Oh!" said Meg.

The young man stood still on the deck, twiddling a book he was just going to put into the shelf.

The two of them looked at each other silently, Neither of them for the moment had the least command of the situation. The most real thing in the world was McMurphy's broad back seen through the tiny port-hole and his unperturbed hammering-in of the last nail. Then suddenly the corners of her mouth twitched and she broke into a smile, a little tremulous and embarrassed, but still a smile.

It is ever the one who can smile first who has the upper hand of a situation. The young man saw it and in a twinkling he was securing the dinghy and helping her on to her own deck.

"So it was you!" she said.

Now did she emphasize the "was" or the "you"? The man realized it made all the difference; in the one case it meant she had been thinking about him and had guessed, in the other that there had been a possible someone else.

"Can you ever forgive me?" he asked.

"Forgive you—why, it's like a fairy dream come true," she said, in a very low voice, and raised such shining eyes to his that he looked down into them and seemed to forget to look away.

At this point McMurphy came lumbering out of the cabin.

"Beg pardon, sir," he began, with a preliminary cough that seemed to him to be the right thing to do.

Carleton turned from his study of those brown eyes with a little start and a laugh.

"Here's McMurphy," he said, by way of vague introduction. "My fellow-conspirator."

Meg held out her hand to him at once. "I think you are two fairies," she said, shyly.

This tickled McMurphy's usual surliness. "He-he-he," he chuckled. "I've been called some names in me lifetime—the Cap'en's fair good at it when he gets goin'—but no one's ever called me a fairy before, and that's truth." Then a thought struck into his wily old brain.

"Beg pardon, missy, but there's one or two things in that cabin as I just wants to clear up, you being early-like to-day, so if the Cap'en would just be showin' you them new roses wot's up on deck——"

Obediently Meg and Carleton mounted the little gangway that led to the roof of the house-boat. McMurphy had seemed to give them no time for protests or explanations. And the wonder of it all still held Meg in a hopeless shyness that was not like the cool and self-possessed young woman that had dived off the deck but three weeks before.

And all that Carleton felt was that somehow he had expected to feel all kinds of a fool and he didn't—that was all.

When they returned from the inspection of some new little rose-trees that adorned the four corners of the deck they found McMurphy and the punt gone. Somehow they must have been very absorbed not to hear him blundering away with the paddle.

They looked into the little cabin. McMurphy had laid lunch, and places were set for two.

"The old villain—he has marooned me," said Carleton, watching the punt just turning the bend of the stream and careering wildly from side to side in the effort. "There's nothing for it but——" He burst out laughing suddenly.

"To do as he meant you to," finished Meg, and she laughed a little too.

"May I?"

"It's your lunch, after all."

So he stayed.

There was a disquieting moment when Carleton told her who he really was, for the gossip of the riverside had come vaguely to Meg's ears of the very wealthy young man who had bought the most beautiful houseboat on the river wherein to recoup after being badly wounded in an action which had given him his D.S.O. Something of a hero he was to the small riverside contingent, and her heart thumped one way on account of his deeds, another on account of his wealth, and a third way still when she remembered how he had worked for her pleasure throughout the weeks and had shyly absented himself on the week-ends. But the wind in the willows overhead fanned her cheeks till they were cool and glowing, and she forgot everything about him except the man himself.

Later on in the afternoon they still sat on the tiny upper-deck in the chairs which Carleton had so thoughtfully provided. And she turned to him, smiling suddenly.

"You have forgotten one thing," she said.

"What's that?" he asked, anxiously.

"The pirate's flag with the skull and cross-bones—you were going to nail it to the flagstaff."

He was silent a moment. Then, like the brave lad he was, he took the plunge.

"I think it is you who have nailed up the pirate's flag," he said, in a very low voice.

"Oh, where?" she asked, and her heart thumped in a different way still.

"Can't you guess?" said Carleton, very softly, and he looked into her eyes again.

Is there a Sherlock Holmes among our readers? Here is a chance for him.

A VISION OR —?

By DAVID DEVANT.

Illustrated by Dudley Tennant.

Mr. David Devant, the great illusionist, has written a problem story for the readers of "The Strand Magazine." We shall publish his own solution of the mystery in due course, but in the meantime we invite our readers to send in their own explanations, and we shall be pleased to publish—and pay for—the one that comes nearest to Mr. Devant's.

"SURELY that's someone coming down the road now. Listen a minute, Sylvia; perhaps——"

The shadow of a frown passed quickly over the face of the younger of the two women. She had been on the point of saying something that would have beaten down and completely frustrated all Aunt Jane's arguments; this sudden, enforced silence irritated her. She knew that no one was coming down that lonely road, but Aunt Jane had to be humoured; therefore Sylvia assumed an attitude of intense expectation.

The rain beat against the windows of the little cottage; the only other sound was the ticking of the clock on the sitting-room mantelpiece.

Presently Aunt Jane, who had been regarding the clock as though she would reprove it for ticking, looked up at Sylvia and shook her head.

"I thought that perhaps he might have come by an earlier train," she said.

"No such luck, auntie. Still, only about three more hours to wait for him. Hoo—ray!"

She danced lightly round the table and clapped her hands. Aunt Jane picked up her knitting.

"And you're still determined to ride to Denham Junction to meet him, my dear?"

"Of course I'm going; I promised him I'd be there. Besides, I—I want to be there."

"Well, I call it sheer madness to go on a night like this. You'll never be able to ride in this wind, and you'll be drenched in the first five minutes. Surely even he won't be so unreasonable as to expect you."

"Why do you say 'even he,' auntie? Jack's not at all unreasonable."

"No—he's much worse than that."

The retort had come quickly. It revealed the inward meaning of the dispute which had broken the peace of the little cottage all that afternoon. Aunt Jane had tried to persuade her niece not to ride to the station in the evening to meet her lover. Now it was evident that all the arguments Aunt Jane had used had been sham. Her real reason for trying to keep Sylvia at home had nothing to do with the bad weather, or the state of the roads, or the difficulty of riding a bicycle in a high wind.

The simple truth was that Aunt Jane hated the man whom Sylvia was to meet. If Sylvia did not meet him he would be grievously disappointed. The task of finding his way to the cottage by himself would probably annoy him and put him in a bad temper. That might be the beginning of a lovers' quarrel which might develop into a permanent separation. Aunt Jane had hoped it might happen, but she had given herself away.

Sylvia did not reply at once to the vague accusation against her lover. Presently she sat down on the floor close to Aunt Jane and put a restraining hand on the knitting-needles. Then she took Aunt Jane's bony hands in hers and patted them.

"Auntie, let's be honest with each other. You don't like Jack?"

"I don't think he's good enough for you, my dear." (Here Aunt Jane released one hand in order that she might pass it over Sylvia's hair.) "I've always said that he's not good enough; at least, I've practically said it. But as you're never happy except when you're writing to him or hearing from him or seeing him, I—very reluctantly—allowed him to come here to-night . . . . He's a rolling stone, Sylvia, and you know it."

"He has been a little unlucky in business matters; that's all you can justly say against him—if that's anything. I don't think it is."

"That's not the point. He's always scheming

"SYLVIA STOOD ON THE PEDAL AND THE BICYCLE SHOT FORWARD."

to make money instead of working for it. I don't like a schemer."

"I don't think you're quite just to him."

"I think I am. He keeps us in the dark too much. Why, you can't tell me even now what this wonderful new scheme is he has for winning fame and fortune in five minutes. You know nothing about it. You don't even know how he proposes to earn his living."

"He's going to make money out of his hobby, auntie."

"His hobby! Conjuring. A lot of money made out of that! Never. It isn't what I call a nice occupation—next door to card-sharping it seems to me. No, my dear, the truth is that you don't really know how he is going to earn his living, and yet you talk about marrying him!"

"Yes—and I'm going to marry him and—I trust him."

"And I am not going to marry him," said Aunt Jane, with a grim smile, as she took up her knitting again, "and I most certainly do not trust him."

"Well, I think you're most unfair and unkind."

Sylvia left the room quietly and closed the door. Aunt Jane's knitting dropped in her lap. The ball of wool rolled on the floor and a blue Persian kitten, which had been asleep in front of the fire, woke up lazily and played with it. Aunt Jane did not enter into the game, as was her custom. She was thinking.

She had done what she believed to be the right thing. But was it right? Perhaps by expressing her dislike of this man she was helping to bring about the very disaster she wished to avert. It was the mystery surrounding this man's mode of living that made her distrust him. She hated mysteries; even a puzzle or

an acrostic in the local paper annoyed her. If Jack had been an ordinary sort of a man, employed at some work which could be talked about, she would have forgiven him for being penniless; as it was, she really hated him because he contrived to hide himself from her.

Sylvia was moving about overhead, preparing for her ride to the station. It was foolish of her to go, but she was young and—— Aunt Jane's thoughts travelled backwards. She recalled the year when she was Sylvia's age and saw again the face of the man whom she had worshipped in secret. He had married her sister, and her idolatry of Sylvia was partly due to the fact that she was his daughter. She must make her peace with Sylvia.

Aunt Jane opened the door and went to the foot of the stairs.

"You'd better take my goloshes, dear; you'll want them."

"Thank you, auntie; I will."

Presently Sylvia came down dressed for her ride. Aunt Jane superintended the lighting of the bicycle lamp and opened the front door.

"It's still pouring, my dear; what a pity it is!"

"Never mind, auntie, I can change when I come back—in about two hours. Forgive me if I seemed cross just now. I—well, I suppose I was!"

"And your old Aunt Jane made you—not for the first time. Never mind, dear; it's all over now. You know I was only thinking of your happiness. Take care and come back as soon as you can."

She waited at the open door until Sylvia had ridden slowly away. Then she went to the kitchen. Aunt Jane knew very little of men, but one of her great central notions of them was that they were usually hungry, and especially so after a railway journey.

Sylvia dismounted when she turned into the main road. Aunt Jane had been right; it was impossible to ride in this wind. She would have to walk most of the way to the station and free-wheel down the hills; there was plenty of time.

To wheel a bicycle on a muddy road against a high wind is not light work for a woman, and Sylvia was soon exhausted. At the top of a long hill she paused to take breath. Then she got on the bicycle and prepared herself for the exhilarating rush downhill through the rain to the valley below. To her disgust the bicycle scarcely moved; the mud and the high wind were the brakes. She began to pedal.

Suddenly a man stepped from a gateway and called to her to stop. Sylvia stood on the pedals and the bicycle shot forward. Then she crouched down over the handle-bars and flew down the hill, whispering to herself that she must not be frightened, and that the man was probably only a drunken tramp, and that she was perfectly safe if only she could keep the wheel straight.

At the bottom of the hill she thought she heard a voice calling to her, but a second afterwards she told herself that it was a mere fancy. No man could make his voice carry against that wind. Besides, why should the man want to call when she was out of his reach?

She tried to keep up the pace on the level road, but she had put out all her strength and could not make the bicycle move beyond walking pace. It seemed strangely heavy. At last she slipped off and looked at the back tyre; it was flat.

She pushed the bicycle along till she came to a tree by the side of the road. She tied her handkerchief to a low branch of the tree to mark the place and then let the bicycle slide down into the ditch.

Two miles to walk. The rain stopped suddenly, the wind died down, and the moon looked out from the clouds. She glanced back, stopped for a second, and listened for footsteps in the distance. Not a sound. The man who had tried to waylay her was not following her.

It began to rain again, more heavily than before, and clouds drew their curtain over the moon. She pressed on down the black road, walking a few yards, running a few yards, until she reached the station. She was utterly exhausted, but she could not remain still. She walked quickly up and down the little platform. A few minutes more—only a few minutes—and then——

Of course she was wrong. The train was late, but it was coming at last; she heard it in the distance.

A sleepy station-master and two porters appeared in readiness to give the train an official welcome. Sylvia suddenly decided to hide herself and then to appear as a sudden surprise to Jack, who surely would not expect to see her; he would know that she could not ride through the storm.

Five men and one woman passed through the little booking-office. Jack would be the seventh passenger. She knew it; seven was Jack's lucky number.

There were no other passengers. After waiting a few minutes Sylvia walked out on to the platform again. The two porters and the station-master were talking to the engine-driver and guard of the train. She joined them.

"Is this the nine-ten—the Dinthorpe Branch train, please?"

"Yes, miss."

"I'm meeting a friend who—er—hasn't arrived. There's no way out of the station, is there, except through the booking-office?"

"That's the only way, miss."

Then Jack had missed the train. The next was eleven-five—nearly two hours to wait. Perhaps the station-master would let her sit by his fire; she felt strangely cold. Sylvia drew nearer to the group of men and overheard one sentence of the conversation. The guard moved away and the train continued its journey. The station-master turned to a porter and mumbled something which Sylvia could not hear. When the porter was leaving the platform Sylvia stopped him.

"Excuse me—just a second, please. Did I hear there had been an accident on the line?"

"No, miss, no accident. Some bloke 'as throwed 'isself on the rails, that's all."

Sylvia ran after the station-master and caught him up just as he was closing his office door.

"That accident on the line—will you please tell me how it happened and what the man was like? I'm here to meet a friend who hasn't arrived."

"There's nothing for you to worry about, miss. This poor chap was not on the train. Won't you come inside and get a bit dry by the fire?"

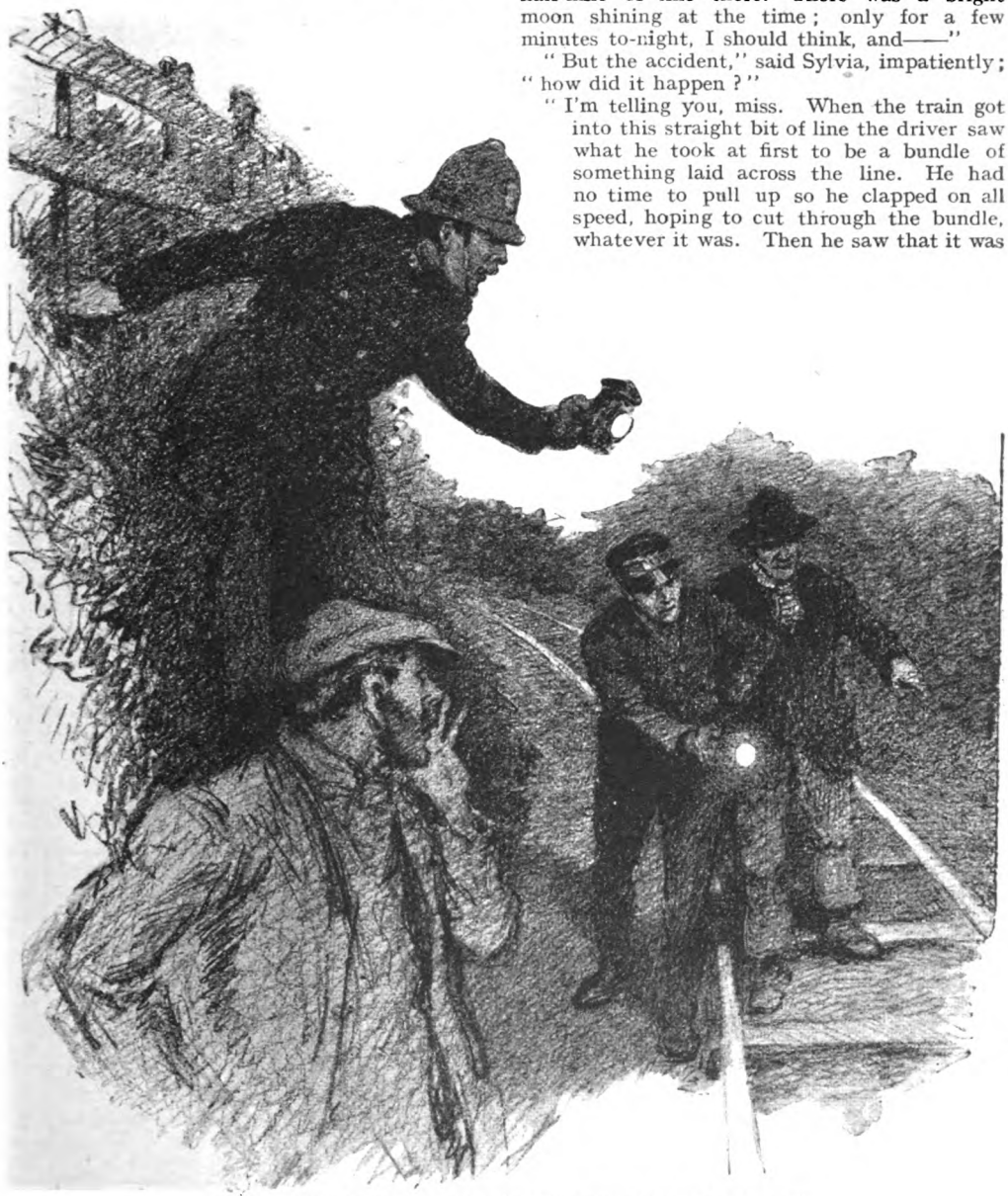
"Thank you, but my friend should have been here, and he's not here. What was this man like, and how did it happen?"

"Don't excite yourself, miss; it can't have been any passenger. It happened just past the bend by the Fortin Meadows; there's a straight half-mile of line there. There was a bright moon shining at the time; only for a few minutes to-night, I should think, and——"

"But the accident," said Sylvia, impatiently; "how did it happen?"

"I'm telling you, miss. When the train got into this straight bit of line the driver saw what he took at first to be a bundle of something laid across the line. He had no time to pull up so he clapped on all speed, hoping to cut through the bundle, whatever it was. Then he saw that it was a man." (Here the station-master consulted his notes.) "He was face downwards—no hat—blue serge suit—a man much under average height. The driver let his whistle go for all it was worth. The moon was behind a cloud then, and he couldn't see, but, of course, the poor chap—why, what's the matter?"

Sylvia had swooned. The station-master caught her in his arms and tried to revive her.



"'NO SIGN OF NO CORPSE 'ERE,' SAID THE POLICEMAN."

Then he sent for his wife and, finally, for the doctor.

* * * * *

The search-party, consisting of the village policeman, a railway porter, and two labourers, had reached the spot indicated by the engine-driver. The party pushed their way through the hedge and stumbled down the bank on to the line. Two of the men carried lanterns, but they were not necessary, for the wind had drawn away the clouds from the moon and the wet, shining rails gleamed in the light.

The men looked down the line and up the line to the bend at the Fortin Meadows. Then they looked at each other.

The corpse had vanished.

"No sign of no corpse 'ere," said the policeman. "I reckon old Jim must have been on the booze and see more'n was there."

"Not 'e," said the porter. "Jim's strict teetotal."

* * * * *

The following evening a paragraph about a missing corpse appeared in the London papers. The next morning the story, filled in with many details, was circulated all over the country. People asked each other questions at their breakfast tables, such as :—

"Was it a vision, or——?"

"Were the suicide and the missing man the same man ?"

"If the corpse was not that of the missing man how was it that Sylvia had heard nothing more from her lover ?"

"Was it suicide ? Could it have been murder ?"

"Had the engine-driver been mistaken ?" (An interview in one paper gave the direct "No" to that question.)

"In any case, how and why had the corpse vanished ?"

Newspaper photographers swooped down on Aunt Jane's little cottage, borrowed photographs of Sylvia—who was too ill to be photographed—took pictures of Aunt Jane, the cottage, the bicycle, the spot on the high road where the man had tried to stop Sylvia, the tree under which she had hidden the bicycle, and the stretch of line where the suicide apparently occurred. And for the first and only time in her life Aunt Jane had to submit to the cross-examination of interviewers.

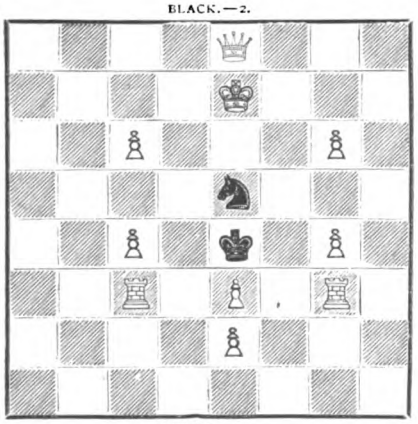
One day, when the public were nearly tired of the story of the missing corpse and were ready for another problem to solve, a man called at the office of a certain London newspaper, wrote a few words on his card, and sent it up to the news-editor.

In a few moments this man was being closely questioned and his replies were being taken down by a shorthand writer. The next morning that paper came out with a scoop. "Secret of the Missing Corpse" was on all its bills. . . . .

TWO CHESS CURIOSITIES.

By T. B. ROWLAND.

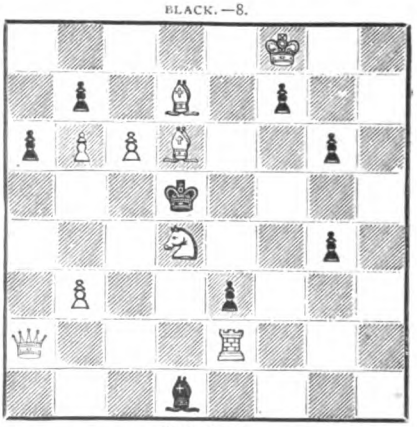
BLACK.—2.



WHITE.—10.

White to play and mate in two moves.

BLACK.—8.



WHITE.—9.

White to play and mate in three moves.

These extraordinary problems are two veritable curiosities in the chess world, as, in order to complete the various variations of the solutions, a knight has to make a circular tour in each. The black knight makes the round in the two-mover, which, it will be noticed, is symmetrically constructed, and a white knight performs the feat in the three-mover.

(*Solutions next month.*)

THE AIRMAN AS EXPLORER

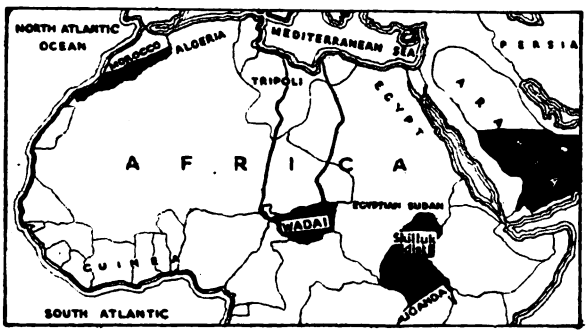
by REG. CUDWORTH

IF civilization can offer no gamble to the flying man, Nature can still provide him with all the hazards of adventure. One-seventh of the earth's surface yet remains to be explored, embracing the most difficult, dangerous, and inaccessible parts of the world. Nature, in these remote regions, has defied all the white man's attempts to scale her heights, intrude upon her arid solitudes, escape from the lurking dangers of her virgin forests, or feast his sight upon her snowy wastes. She laughed his foot expeditions out of court; but she cannot laugh at the equipment of the winged explorer. In fact, there is little the airman cannot do. From Gibraltar he can peep upon the tribal fanatics of Southern Morocco, and dwell awhile on the Western Atlas Mountains. From Egypt he has a flying ground of thousands of square miles in the Eastern Sahara, and if he is fond of rolling sand, the deserts of Arabia, too. Both are within his reach, and he is certain of no company except what he takes with him. For a change, the coast of the Guianas is ideal for slipping into the malarial jungles of the Cordillera of Southern Venezuela, and when tired and seeking a brief rest he should find a convenient landing spot on the Tumac Humac. Or else the desert of Gobi from the Siberian Railway, or portions of the Polar area that are not "the home of the blizzard," might be worth his attention. But let him beware of the illimitable forests of Brazil, the hurricane lands of Western Antarctica, the windy heights and icy crests of the Himalayas, without proper regard to the pitfalls that beset the unwary in these regions. An airman would probably fly a thousand feet above the Great Himalaya, the main range, which from the south appears like a gleaming wall of snow and ice. Some of the snow fields of the Himalayas are only accessible from the air, and if he landed on one, an engine stoppage might leave him marooned in an exposed and precarious position.

ON THE ABOVE MAP OF ASIA THE UNEXPLORED REGIONS ARE SHOWN IN BLACK.

It would be hard to find any scientific task more interesting than the exploration of certain regions of Afghanistan and the study of its

wild pagan inhabitants, the bold Kafirs, and other strange tribes. In the north-east corner of the country large portions of Badakshan and Kafiristan are entirely unknown. The mountaineers of Afghanistan are among the fiercest of warriors, and have always resisted the passage of explorers to their country. South-Eastern Tibet is still a land of certain mysteries. The course of the river Tsangpu for some miles through the Himalayas is unknown. In Tibet it is eleven thousand feet above the sea, and it breaks through the Himalayas at a height of only five hundred feet above it. This glorious river, two hundred or three hundred yards in width in Tibet, actually loses an altitude of not less than ten thousand five hundred feet. The still-hidden stretch of its bed may provide an unrivalled scenic panorama of falls, rapids, and gorges; a glorious vista for artist or photographer.



HERE AGAIN THE BLACK INDICATES SOME VAST UNEXPLORED AREAS.

Shrouded in mist are the supposed ruins of ancient towns and other interesting phenomena on the barren mountains west of Seyistan. No one has ever followed the entire course of the supposed ancient channels of the Oxus river, and history is consequently denied an interesting page upon the fluctuation of the Aral and Caspian Seas, and, for those of less scientific bent, a chapter on the conditions of an ancient civilization. In mountainous regions of Chinese Turkestan are unexplored vast glaciers and lofty peaks, and there is every possibility of the finding of ruins in the untrodden tracts of the desert which occupies the centre of the south-west basin.

The aerial wanderer, inspired with a true love of adventure, will doubtless be pleased to know that not all the Dark Continent is yet an open book. In fact, it still jealously guards some very black spots. Even in British territory how much is known of the inner Shilluk districts of the Sudan; the region between the upper waters of the Blue Nile and the limits of the Uganda, or the line of the Senussi oases from Tripoli or the Cyrenaica towards Wadai? What European has seen, much less trod, huge areas within the desert region of Southern Asia? There are other areas which have been crossed always in haste and even in fear; also regions visited perhaps by a score of travellers since the revival of learning, but inhabited by peoples of whom we have learned much less than about the Polar Eskimo.

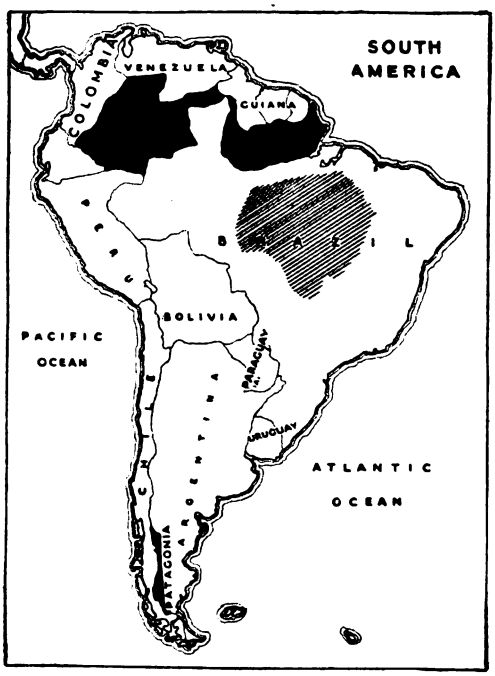
The greatest unseen area lies in Arabia, almost all the southern half of which is occupied, according to native report, by a great wilderness known as the "Dwelling of the Void." Three travellers have claimed that they have gazed on its uttermost fringes from west, south, and east respectively, but no European has ever entered this immense tract of 600,000 square miles. It is further doubtful, moreover, whether any native has ever crossed any part but certain tongues which it throws out towards the Persian Gulf, and towards the Indian Ocean south-west of the latter province. Some maps mark a caravan track running through the heart of this desert, but at a Dutch colony in Java to which colonists from South Arabia generally resorted, Javanese Arabs denied all knowledge of it. There may be some oases of life, and some possibility of travelling in the awful waste, but it will be left to the airman to find this out over the passage of either eight hundred and fifty miles west to east, or six hundred and fifty miles north to south in the isothermal zone of the world's greatest heat. It is the leanest of lean lands, and although it is traditionally supposed to contain black Bedawis, and tracts of palms, we have as little proof of the true facts as the Moslem geographers had in the Middle Ages, and perhaps less.

The biggest feat left for a traveller to perform in Arabia, perhaps in all Asia, is to cross the Yemen, then on to Nejran, from there along the Wady Dauasir to Aflaj and High Nejd. The southernmost provinces of these lands, noted for their waters and comparative fertility, have still to be seen by Western eyes, and it would now seem that these eyes will be those of an airman, whose airship will be more than probably worshipped as a miracle from the celestial blue. He will have to determine what becomes of the inland flowing waters of West Central Arabia, and to throw light on the mysterious valley region which Moslems in the Middle Ages said existed on the North Central fringe of the Great Desert, and contained half-buried cities among whose ruins the Bedawis found coins. He should learn much about the mysterious Kahtan Arabs, and their possible African origin. The Nejd warrior, however, does not like the Westerner, and the explorer's machine must be equipped with all the means of defence in case of surprise after landing. The land is infested with religious fanatics of an extreme type, and as the whole population is dependent upon slave labour, Britons, with their anti-slave views, are regarded as destroyers of social wealth. Halévy passed through the country for some distance in the modified disguise of an itinerant Rabbi, and bore indignities incidental to his assumed religion, being kicked most of the way from

Yemen to Marib. Doughty had also a nasty time as a poor Christian hakim who begged his way from well to well.

The aerial mountaineer in Asia Minor should find the refugees and survivors of old broken races in the highland valleys and the afforested slopes, and discover brigands on the Boz Dagh, the ancient Tmolus of evil fame, almost in sight of Smyrna. Descents down the tributary valleys to the Euphrates would reveal data of the Roman frontier defences, and show how the Euphratean lines ran between the camp of the Tenth Legion as at Melitene, and of that of the sixteenth as at Samosata. In the ill-known passes of the Tauric chain is a Kurdish society still in a semi-pagan state.

But for the modern investigator, South America still offers the largest field for intelligent inquiry. Regions near the Poles and in the arid deserts can only lend themselves to the progress of material development in a purely auxiliary capacity, or provide quaint lore of the customs and conditions of effete, or almost non-existent, tribes. But South America is teeming with virgin riches, that are only awaiting the magic Sesame of the aerial pioneer. The western side of Patagonia conceals palæontological and ethnological treasures, and entirely new material for sociological and botanical study. There are the partly unknown systems of rivers which flow from the Eastern Andes and combine to form the River Beni; and the maritime Cordillera of the Andes rising over the coast provinces of Tacna and Tarapaca. The explorer has further scope in Parinacoches; the coast valleys and the head waters of the great Colombian affluents to the Amazon. One of the biggest tracts of fertile possibility is in Colombia and Venezuela, bounded on the west by the slopes of the Cordilleras and on the east by the Orinoco and Rio Negro. The whole region from Rio Branco to the Atlantic in Brazil, a distance of six hundred miles, including a dividing range of plains and forests, is an almost untouched ground, from which whispers of strange new life, wonderful vegetation, relics of dead races, and untold minerals reach the ear in inviting strain. So it will be seen that the days of peace and prosperity should bring the white man into personal touch with a great world of living mystery and fresh interest.



SOUTH AMERICA STILL OFFERS THE LARGEST FIELD FOR THE EXPLORER—UNEXPLORED REGIONS ARE SHOWN IN BLACK AND THOSE LITTLE KNOWN BY SHADING.

Equipped with powerful flying machines, the work of exploration should proceed more rapidly than it has ever done, and soon the unexplored environs of the Poles, patches of Central Asia, a large interior of Arabia, parts of the Sahara, spots in Central Africa, large tracts of South America, especially between the great rivers, and certain areas of Australia, should be on the page of accomplished exploration.

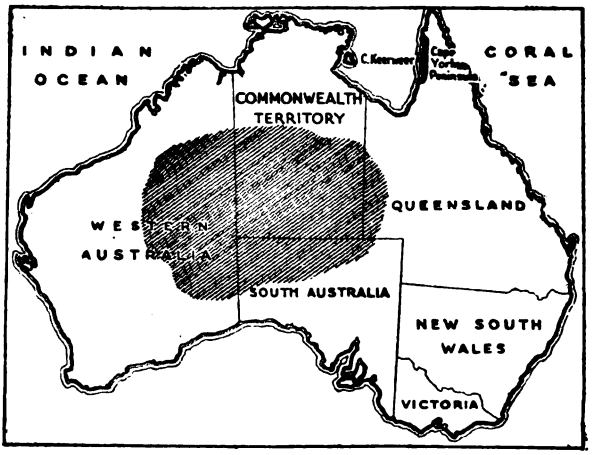
Perhaps the least-known portion of the Australian coast line is along Cape York Peninsula in the vicinity of Cape Keerweer. Apart from one or two mission stations there is no settlement, and the charts still show by their broken lines the nebulous state of our knowledge. Only an aeroplane could enable adequate survey of these mangrove swamps with their tea-tree thickets and scattered eucalyptus. There are other parts of Australia, within the interior, which will soon be opened up. An expedition with aerial scouts is already proposed to cut a road across the entire continent from Sydney to Port Darwin, which will probably be the line of the next railway. This will open the way to much fruitful investigation, and gradually the clouds and mists that have so long shrouded parts of this great country will be pushed back until they are entirely cleared away.

To show the wonderful way in which the map of the world has been filled, it has only to be stated that in 1860, 25,024,360 square statute miles had been mapped from route traverses and sketches, whereas in 1916 this area had increased to 37,550,552 square statute miles. In 1860 no less than 30,997,054 square statute miles were entirely unsurveyed and unmapped, while in 1916 this had been reduced to 8,350,794 square statute miles out of 60,000,000 square miles, the total area of the land surface of the earth, together with the unknown parts of the Arctic and Antarctic regions, which may be either land or water. With the much quicker means of investigation of to-day a decade or two should see the proper survey and mapping of all parts of the earth's surface that are likely to be of any use to a man as settlements, or capable of his development.

Aerial science seems to be keeping pace with the demands which will be made upon it. One of these is the resistance of the engines to frost

while inactive; otherwise there is the risk of frozen engines and permanent stoppage upon landing. This difficulty has no doubt been presented between Vancouver and the Yukon, where there have been experiments with an aerial post, but flying in this region is comparatively simple to the long distances to be covered in Arctic exploration. Already an aerial expedition to the frozen wastes of the Polar regions is being arranged, and the airship will, no doubt, be on lines that will command a big radius of action, and permit of large petrol storage.

The tropics created another set of difficulties. The aeroplane fabric and glue fixtures were found to be of a perishable nature in the climate, and new substitutes of greater resistance to the intense heat were introduced. But to-day an aeroplane, adaptable for any hemisphere, is within the range of science, and soon the flying explorer should be on most routes leading to the unknown beyond the regions of civilization. His story will be an imperishable and thrilling chapter of the history of Nature in her wildest haunts.



PERHAPS THE LEAST-KNOWN PORTION OF THE AUSTRALIAN COAST IS THAT SHOWN IN BLACK; WHILE IMMENSE AREAS IN THE INTERIOR ARE PRACTICALLY UNEXPLORED.

But aerial exploration is not to be lightly undertaken. There is the cost of aeroplanes, hangars, landing places, and maintenance of personnel. Exploration is a stationary thing at times, and bases must be erected. It is one thing to fly over untrodden regions, and quite another to explore it. Science demands much knowledge from the modern explorer. Possibly a nation, or nations, could only furnish the necessary means to provide the material for the aerial highway and stations which are indispensable to satisfactory exploration in remote quarters of the earth. Hundreds of miles of Arabia which no Westerner had seen have been flown over by European officers during the war. Members of these military expeditions have discovered most interesting ruins of half-buried cities. But this work was done from properly-equipped depots. Military bases and aerial post stations may prove the jumping-off points for further expeditions under State ægis. Desert flying would lead to the linking up of the old caravan routes by tracking successive oases; and then, from the beaten paths, the wastes adjoining would be searched for historic ruins.

The function of the aerial investigator would be slightly different in country like South America. Here it was possible, if extremely hazardous, to track the great rivers to their tributaries; and the tributaries, at times, to their sources. The old Jesuit priest got about these distant waterways in a remarkable fashion but even he could not penetrate, or leave records of, the regions of the terrible forests between the rivers. There were no known ways through these jungles. The air scout, however, can reconnoitre above the forests, and search for openings to paths through the jungle, leading perhaps to plains and ancient habitations beyond.

The Poles, of course, present the greatest scientific problems. An airman may be the first to discover whether the Antarctic continent is one connected mass of land, or two or more lands; and if insular, give to the world the shape of the coast lines and the directions of the channels; also, from his observations and discovery of at present unknown currents of air, and water, solve some of the riddles of physical phenomena that still baffle the meteorologist and navigator. In settling the action of varying currents, he may put weather prophecy on a more reliable basis, and help to improve knowledge of the magnetism of the earth, which is still very imperfect. All parts of the world are more jointly interested in Polar exploration than elsewhere, for all stand equally to benefit from the secrets that science may solve through it. Therefore, there is no reason why the heavy cost of establishing aerial links to the Poles should not be pooled between nations, so the work of investigation and research be more or less regular and permanent. Whatever the ways and means, however, the fact remains that the aerial pioneer will be the first in many virgin fields of science and history, and will in his quests find the wine of adventure in bumper draughts.

The list of Prize-winners in the Competition for Novel-readers will be published next month.

THE OGRE AND THE LADY.

An Amusing Bridge Story from America.

By R. F. FOSTER.

HERE is an amusing story from America. A lady, whom we shall call Mrs. Cadmus-Brown, from a small western town, was in New York for the automobile show. She rejoiced mightily in the opportunity to display her newest gowns, her largest jewels, and, above all, her skill at bridge. When the opportunity came, she found herself at the same table with a dashing young aviator, a fair *d butante*, and a man who was evidently born and bred in New York, a man to whom bridge was evidently a serious business, whether because he was doubtful of his skill, or nervous about his partner's, she did not know. She cut him for the first rubber.

With a view to putting him quite at his ease, she hastened to impress upon him that she knew all the latest conventions and doubles, and was considered the best player in her "home town"; to which he replied by hoping that she would excuse any little mistakes he might make. The smiles of the *débutante* and her partner at this statement might have meant anything. They had played with him before. Mrs. Cadmus-Brown was so impressed by the seriousness with which her partner dealt the cards for the first hand that she came to regard him as a sort of ogre.

The ogre dealt and bid no-trump, the fair *débutante* passing. Mrs. Cadmus-Brown at once said two no-trumps, at which the aviator lifted his eyebrows and hastily passed. The little *débutante* led the deuce of spades, and dummy laid down her cards, at the same time taking a peep at the leader's hand. Here is the distribution of the cards:—

Mrs. Cadmus-Brown's Hand.

Hearts—A.
Clubs—A, 10, 9, 8, 6, 4, 2.
Diamonds—K, 10, 8.
Spades—10, 9.

The Débutante.		*The Aviator.*
Hearts—J, 9, 7, 3. Clubs—7, 5. Diamonds—7, 5, 2. Spades—K, Q, 7, 2.	Y A B Z	Hearts—10, 8, 5, 4, 2. Clubs—Q. Diamonds—6, 3. Spades—8, 6, 5, 4, 3.

Hearts—K, Q, 6.
Clubs—K, J, 3.
Diamonds—A, Q, J, 9, 4.
Spades—A, J.

The Ogre's Hand.

The ogre won the first trick with the jack of spades. He inferred from the lead of the lowest spade that there was no suit of five cards in that hand, and that it must, therefore, contain at least *one* club. Now, if he had at least one club, the clubs will fall if the ogre starts with the king in his own hand, as, in case the player on the right has none, it will be easy to take the finesse against the *débutante*.

On dropping the queen, he proceeded with the jack and three, winning with the six in dummy. Although everything was now apparently plain sailing, the ogre appeared to be engrossed in deep thought, while Mrs. Cadmus-Brown fanned herself vigorously, and wondered what he was thinking about, at the same time inwardly wishing that she had cut the aviator for a partner.

Finally he led the ten of clubs from dummy; not the ace, and discarded the ace of spades, at which Mrs. Cadmus-Brown, who had seen both king and queen of spades in the *débutante's* hand, gasped with astonishment.

"No clubs, partner?" she demanded, quickly, placing her fan on the trick before it was turned.

"Didn't I play a club?" he asked, in apparent confusion, taking up the ace of spades, and then adding, "No, I have no clubs. Well, as the ace of spades was played, it will have to stand."

The nine of clubs followed, upon which the ogre shed the ace of diamonds, which brought another gasp from dummy, who was beginning to wonder why such persons were invited to bridge parties at all. On the eight of clubs he discarded the six of hearts. Then he touched one of the dummy's diamonds, and started as if to put it back, whereupon the aviator demanded that he play the touched card, which he did. On the fourth round of diamonds he hastily discarded dummy's ace of hearts. This was too much for his partner's good manners.

"Now you can never get dummy in to make that club," she remonstrated, tapping it with her fan.

"That is so," he agreed, meekly, leading the queen of hearts, "so I might as well get rid of it." Suiting the action to the word, he discarded the ace of clubs on the heart, while Mrs. Cadmus-Brown shook her head in dismay, and looked from one to the other of her opponents, especially the aviator, for sympathy. On the king of hearts the ogre discarded dummy's ten of spades.

The ogre had made a grand slam.

"Did you ever see a grand slam made by discarding all four aces?" he asked, quietly, putting down the score.

"Well, I have never seen such bad play succeed anywhere," she retorted, looking at the aviator for confirmation.

"My dear Mrs. Cadmus-Brown," the aviator assured her, "your partner is Mr. Sidney Lenz, one of the team that won the auction championship of the United States."

The Beach of Dreams.

A ROMANCE.

By H. DE VERE STACPOOLE.

Illustrated by Tom Peddie.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE LEPER.

DÉJEUNER had been prepared for the party in a private room, a big room, for there were twelve guests all told, including not only Cléo's friends, but the business men and the friends of Prince Selm.

But before thinking of *déjeuner* or anything else, Cléo had to see about Raft. She left him standing in the hall whilst she interviewed the manager.

Actually, the business would have been easier for her had she brought with her an animal, even of the largest pattern. The manager, when he had caught a glimpse of the intended guest, revolted; not openly, it is true, but with genuflexions and outstretching of hands.

Where could this man be put, what could be done with him? The valets and ladies' maids would certainly not eat with him, the visitors would object to his presence in the lounge, the servants in the servants' quarters. He was a common sailor man. Heavens! What a problem that manager had to face, something quite new, quite illogical, yet quite logical. He had heard of the wreck of the *Gaston*, and he was as interested in Cléo as an hotel manager could be; he understood the whole case when she told him that Raft had saved her life; he was a man of broad mind, but he knew intimately the mental make-up of his servants, his visitors, and their servants. He discussed the matter with Cléo quite openly, and she saw the reason of all he said. Raft was "impossible" in that hotel. His heroism did not count a bit; it did with the manager, who would not have to sit at table with him; it did not with the waiters and valets and ladies' maids who would have to associate with him, or the guests, whose eyes would be offended by his presence.

"He belongs to a ship," said the manager. Then he solved the question with a burst.

"I will look after him myself." He ran into the hall and called Raft to come with him; then, followed by Cléo, he led the way to a sitting-room, a most elegant sitting-room, upholstered in blue silk.

"Here," said he to the sea-lion, "will you take your seat, and *déjeuner* will be served to you."

"I have to leave you for a bit," said Cléo, putting her hand on his arm; "I won't be long."

"I'll wait for you," said Raft. He was a bit amazed at all the new things around him, and blissfully unconscious of trouble. He threw his cap on a chair and took his pipe from his pocket—the same old pipe he had lit that night on the ledge of the sea-corridor; then he produced a plug of tobacco—the same tobacco whose pungent fume had comforted her there, with the sound of the hungry sea coming through the dark.

Then he sat down on a silk-covered chair, and the manager and the girl turned to leave him.

"I will serve him myself," said the manager. "I understand he is a brave man, but very rough; the servants do not understand these things. It is a difficulty, but after—mademoiselle—after?"

"After what?"

"After he has had his meal?"

She understood. After he had been fed he was to go. He could go, say, to a sailors' lodging-house; she had heard of such things; or he could walk about the streets. The thing was quite simple; it was only right to give him a good meal and some money—a good round sum, seeing all he had done for her.

She was scarcely heeding the manager. She was viewing, full-face, the truth that the manager had demonstrated to her clearly. Raft was impossible. She had had vague ideas of bringing him to Paris and giving him a room for himself in her house on the Avenue Malakoff. She had never thought of the servants; she had thought of her friends, and that they would think her conduct queer. But she saw everything now quite straight and in a dry light. Raft was shipwrecked on a social state; to keep company with him she would have to renounce everything and live on his level. She could not treat him as a servant; even if she could, servants would resent him. He was not of their type, but much lower, a labouring man from the sea. Not to lose him as he was to her she would have to enter the absolutely impossible and absurd, she would have to give up social life and make a world of her own with Raft. With a man whose setting was the sea, the wilderness, whose life was action, who was ignorant of art, philosophy, the convenances, who was a figure of scorn to every educated eye when caught against the background of civilization.

In three beats of a pendulum all this passed through her mind.

Then she said to the manager:—

"Quite so. I understand. I must thank you very much for your real kindness. I shall give

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"'I WILL SERVE HIM MYSELF,' SAID THE MANAGER. 'I UNDERSTAND HE IS A BRAVE MAN, BUT VERY ROUGH; THE SERVANTS DO NOT UNDERSTAND THESE THINGS.'"

this man a sum of money, and this afternoon you will be free of him. He can find shelter at a sailors' home—I have heard of such places."

"Oh, *Mon Dieu!* yes," said the manager, vastly relieved; "and either I or Fritz, my head-waiter, will serve him with his food. Fritz is a man of temperament and knowledge, and I will explain to him."

He hurried off, and she was left alone in the corridor.

She opened the door of the little sitting-room. The leper was seated hunched on his chair just as she had seen him sitting often on a rock; he was surrounded with a cloud of tobacco-smoke.

She had seen the loneliness of Kerguelen, but that was nothing to this.

Poor Raft! The very chairs and tables shouted at him. He looked ridiculous. How in her wildest dreams could she have entertained the idea of holding him to her, here?

He would have looked more ridiculous, only that he looked, what he felt, forlorn. The place was beginning to tell on him, used to the rough and the open—the smooth and the closed were getting at him.

When he saw her he took the pipe from his mouth and pressed the burning tobacco down with his finger nervously—the same finger she had sucked once when parched with thirst.

She saw, as a matter of fact, that he was nervous, if the term could apply to such a huge and powerful organism; and the fear came to her that if left alone he might bolt before she could conduct him in person to the sailors' home.

Standing with the door held half open, she nodded to him.

"I want you to stay here," said she, "till I come back. I have to talk to all those people you saw, and I may be a couple of hours. That man will bring you something to eat. You don't mind my leaving you here?"

"Oh, I don't mind," said Raft; "but you'll be wanting something to eat yourself."

"I'll get it."

"You'll come back, sure?"

"Sure."

She laughed, nodded to him, and closed the door.

In the corridor she met Mme. de Brie, who had been hunting for her.

"Cléo, they are waiting *déjeuner* for you—but, my dear child, you have not changed. Has no one shown you to your room?"

The old lady had not only brought along Cléo's maid, who, with the rest of the servants, had been on board-wages during her mistress's absence, but a trunk full of clothes.

"I am not going to change," said Cléo. "I am too busy—and too hungry."

A reporter from the *Gaulois* stopped her as she was turning towards the room indicated by Mme. de Brie, where *déjeuner* was to be served.

"Mademoiselle," said the reporter, "I did not like to trouble you sooner; may I crave the honour of a short interview with you on account of the *Gaulois*?"

"Certainly, monsieur," replied the girl. "Pray come to *déjeuner* as my guest. I hope to tell my friends something of my experiences, and what I say you can repeat—that will be better than a formal interview *tête-à-tête*, which, after all, is rather a depressing affair."

The *déjeuner* was not a depressing affair. Cléo struck the note. She was in radiant good humour. Mme. de Brie sat on her right, M. de Brie on her left, M. Bonvalot, her man of affairs, with his long Dundreary whiskers, opposite to her; the rest were scattered on either side of the long table.

At first the conversation was general; then, after a while, Cléo was talking and the rest listening.

"As I shall be very busy for a long time," said Cléo, "I would like now to give all the information I can about the loss of the yacht. A gentleman is present on behalf of the *Gaulois*, and as all details I can give relative to the disaster are of world-wide interest, considering the position of the late Prince Selm, I take this opportunity of making them known. Unfortunately, they are few."

She told briefly but clearly the story of the disaster, of her escape and landing on Kerguelen, of the caves and the cache and the death of the two men. She did not tell how La Touche met his end—that business had to do with no one but herself and La Touche. She gave it to be understood that he, like Bompard, had met his fate in the quicksands.

She told of her loneliness, and how she had been dying simply from loneliness, and how she had been saved by Raft, and how he had nursed her like a mother.

It was then that she really began to talk and show them pictures. They saw the beach and that terrible journey along under the cliffs, cliffs that seemed cut out of night and never-ending; the sea, like an obsession, crawling shoreward, and Raft carrying her on his shoulder.

They saw the summit where she had stood looking towards the west, and the hopeless prospect of finding a bay that might not be there and an anchorage where there might be a ship, on a coast where few ships ever came.

Fascinated and warmed by Perrier Jouet, they followed her to the place where the wind had brought her the smell of the try-pots and to the cliff-edge where Derision showed her the Chinese whaler and the terrible little men, blood-stained and busy with butchery.

She showed them the great serang—captain of the Chinese—driving them off the beach and telling them to begone back into the wilderness, and, vaguely, of the fight where Raft had saved her from death or worse.

"Ah, *Mon Dieu*, what a man!" cried a female voice down the table.

Cléo stopped.

"Yes, Mme. la Comtesse," said she; "but a man beyond the pale, a man to be ashamed of, a man who, were he to sit in the lounge of this hotel and smoke his pipe, would drive all the other guests away. A common sailor. A man rough from the sea and illiterate."

There was a dead silence.

M. Bonvalot, a Socialist though a business man, nodded his head. He broke the silence.

"A man," said Monsieur Bonvalot, "is, after all, a man."

"Oh, no, monsieur, he is not," said Cléo; "not in Marseilles. But do not think I am quarrelling with social conditions; there must, I believe, always be hewers of wood and drawers of water. I am just talking of Raft and my own position as regards him. I am not thinking of the fact that he saved my life time and again, or that he nursed me with his great rough hands as tenderly as a mother. I am thinking of the fact that I have discovered something quite new and genuine—a human heart that is warm and real and true and simple, simple as the heart of a child, a mind that has no crookedness; a man who, in Paris or here in Marseilles, is absurd, not because he is rough and uncouth, but because he is, like Monsieur Gulliver, amongst the little people. I have seen the great, I have seen the wind and

the sun and the sea and the mountains as they really are, and life as it really is, for those who really live. I have seen death. None of you here have ever seen or imagined death, none of you here have ever seen life, none of you here have seen the world. You all have been protected from the truth of things, and fortunately, for the truth of things would break you as it would have broken me but for Raft, who sits in a room at the end of that corridor and whom the manager of this hotel is serving with food with his own hands because the hotel servants would consider it an insult were they asked to carry him his food.

" I am not grumbling. I quite recognize the logic of the whole thing, but I feel as though I were looking at everything through the large end of a pair of opera-glasses, just as when, as a child, I used to do so and amuse myself by watching human beings reduced to the size of dolls.

" Well, now you have all my story, and I have put before you a new view of things, and I hope I have not shocked you all. My poor Raft must now go to the sailors' home, where I am going with him. I want some money, M. Bonvalot."

" Mademoiselle," said Bonvalot, awaking like a person from hypnotism and delighted to find himself on a business footing again, " certainly. I have here your cheque-book, which I have brought with me."

" Then we will go to another room and discuss business matters," said the girl, rising. " Now all you people, please enjoy yourselves—you are my guests whilst you stay in this hotel. Mme. de Brie will see that you have everything."

She led the way from the room, M. Bonvalot following. A suite had been engaged for her, and here in the sitting-room she started to talk business with her man of affairs.

A large fortune is like a delicate animal, always in need of nursing and attention—it is always changing colour in spots, from rosy to dark ; a depreciation in Peruvian bonds means that your capital has shrunk just there, and the question comes—will it go on shrinking ? A big rise in P.L.M. shares suggests taking the profit and re-investing should they fall again.

Monsieur Bonvalot had problems of this sort to set before the girl—she swept them away. " I have no time to attend to all that now," said she ; " some other day will do. I want twenty thousand francs. Have you got them ? "

" Twenty thousand francs ! " said Bonvalot. " No, mademoiselle. I brought five thousand francs in notes, thinking you would want them for your expenses here ; but you can write a cheque on the Crédit Lyonnais and I will get it cashed for you at once."

He produced from a wallet a bundle of pink and blue bank-notes and counted out five thousand francs ; then she wrote a cheque for fifteen thousand payable to him. He endorsed it, went off, and returned in ten minutes with the money. She put the notes in a big envelope and the envelope in her pocket. That same pocket still contained the old tobacco-box of Captain Slocum and the other odds-and-ends which she treasured more than gold.

" That will do for the present," said she ; " to-morrow I will open an account at the Marseilles branch of the Crédit Lyonnais, or rather you can do it for me to-day. Give them this specimen of my signature, and they can telegraph to the Paris branch. I would like two hundred thousand francs put to my credit here."

" But are you not coming back to Paris ? " asked Bonvalot.

" No, Monsieur Bonvalot ; not at present."

He pulled his whiskers. The idea had suddenly come to him, and come to him strongly, that she was about to do " something foolish."

He had seen women do very foolish things in the course of his business life, and all that talk of hers at the luncheon-table came back to him now.

He remembered the beautiful Mlle. de Lacy, who had run off and married a groom ; could it be possible that Cléo contemplated any such mad act with that terrific sailor man ? The idea chilled his heart.

Equality and fraternity were parts of his motto, and he was an honest Socialist, and he believed honestly that all men were equals, and that the waiters who served him at table were as good as himself, with a difference, of course, due to the accidents of life ; but he believed, with Daudet, that there is no greater abyss than class difference.

His theory was confounded by his practice. But he could say nothing, for the matter was too delicate to be touched upon.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A NEW HOME.

RAFT was still in the room where Cléo had left him.

As they passed through the hall, where a number of people were seated about in basket chairs, she felt every eye fixed upon her and her companion. Then, out in the sunlit Cannebière Prolongué, she drew a deep breath just as a person draws a deep breath after à dive.

She also felt free.

She had always been free in theory ; possessed of her own money, she could have done absolutely as she liked, in theory. In practice she had always been a slave. The slave of a thousand and one things and circumstances, things and circumstances many of them troublesome, many of them wearisome, all of them not to be denied.

" Mademoiselle, your bath is ready."

" Mademoiselle, the first gong has sounded."

" What dress will Mademoiselle wear this afternoon ? "

Oh, the day, the day with its hundred phases and divisions, the dresses that went with each phase, the lukewarm emotions and interests and boredom and suppressed hatreds ; this thing called the day, which she had first reviewed in the open boat after the wreck of the *Gaston de Paris*, terrified to find it torn from her—this thing had been returned to her that morning in all its futility. It seemed to her, as she cast it away, a horrible gaud, a thing made of tinsel, yet

"AS THEY PASSED THROUGH THE HALL, CLÉO FELT EVERY EYE FIXED UPON HER AND HER COMPANION."

a thing that could destroy the soul and blind the eyes and numb the heart.

She had never been free, she had always been the veriest slave, the slave of things, of people, of convenances, and of circumstances.

Dr. Epinard had spoken something of the truth.

Man may not be an automaton worked by environment; all the same, he is the slave of environment, and never such a slave as when his environment is that of high civilization.

For there the pure motives of the mind have ever to be regulated and falsified, the heart crushed, the face veiled.

To break with all that falsity means shipwreck.

"Which way does the sea lie?" asked the girl. Raft turned to the left as though the smell of the sea were leading him.

"I'm glad to be out of there," said he. "I was near smothered in that place."

"So was I," said she. "Did that man bring you your food all right?"

"Another chap brought it," said Raft; "a Dutchman."

She laughed.

"Do you know what I was thinking?" said she. "I was thinking of the time you brought me food when I was nearly dying. You didn't tell a Dutchman to bring it. I'd have brought you your food myself and we would have had it together only I had to talk to those people. Well, I've got rid of them. How would you like to live always in a place like that hotel?"

Raft mentally reviewed the room done in blue silk, Fritz, and the rest of it.

"I'd rather be out in the open," said Raft. "Not that I have anything to say against it—but I'd rather be out in the open."

They walked along.

Companionship with Raft had for her one delightful thing about it. It was companionship without restraint. In a way it was like companionship with a dog or a child. Like two old sailors, they would hang silent, sometimes, for a long time, not bothering to speak, content with being together.

She had never imagined the possibility of a man and a woman of absolutely different social position in such a relationship, never drawn the ghost of such an idea from all the books she had read, all the plays she had seen.

Raft, the common man, had made her social world seem vulgar as well as small, chill as well as vulgar.

She was thinking just now, as she walked beside him, how, when she had told him that the hotel manager would bring him something to eat, he had said, "But you will want something

to eat yourself." That was the sort of thing constantly recurring in all sorts of ways that had brought her to know him truly, occurring in little ways as well as in that great and heroic moment when he had told her to destroy herself with the knife if he were killed. . . . . .

As they passed along the Cannebière they saw a drunken sailor reeling along towards them through the crowd, and Raft drew her by the arm off the footpath to avoid him.

The sight in other times would have made him laugh, or more likely it would have been scarcely noticed; but she, in some manner or another, made drink discreditable, and the sight of it to be avoided. It would have been the same, most likely, had he been taking a child for a walk. Down near the docks they passed a bird shop, before which Raft cast anchor, almost forgetful of his companion. There were all sorts of birds here, those tiny birds from the African coast one sees in the shops of the Riviera, canaries, and parrots.

There was one parrot, enormous and coloured like a tropical sunset, drowsy-eyed and insolent-looking. When he saw the sailor man he seemed to rouse up. He looked at Raft, and Raft at him.

"I'd like that chap," said Raft; "he beats the lot of them."

"And you shall have him," said she.

He laughed.

"Much good he'd be to a chap like me. Where'd I keep him?"

Her eyes softened as she looked at the bird and from the bird to the man. Where, indeed, could he keep him? He who had no home—nothing. Then it was that money seemed to her what it really is—a god, beautiful and benign.

It had often seemed to her as a demon; but Raft, who unconsciously had cast ridicule on her world, was now, unconsciously, showing her the great truth she had never seen before, the truth that money is more beautiful than Apollo, more ethereal than Psyche, more powerful than Jove.

"You will soon have somewhere to keep him," said she. "We will get him to-morrow. Come on. I want now to find the place where the fishing-boats put in. I saw it the last time I was here in Marseilles, years ago, but I am not sure of the direction."

She asked a man who was passing, and he pointed the way; it was a long distance, but it seemed short, so full was her mind with the plan she had formulated before leaving the hotel. She talked as she went. Talked just as though they were on the Kerguelen beach hunting for a cave.

"We will find a place to put the parrot. I want a great big boat—not a yacht. I've had enough of those. I want a good sea-boat, and the fisher-boats I have seen here seemed to me good, and the men are the right sort of men. I am going to buy one—or hire one—well, we shall see. I want you to help to get it ready for us. How good the smell of this place is!" She paused to sniff the tar-sea scents brought by the afternoon wind—it was like the smell of freedom.

Then they came on to the fisher wharf, and right into the arms of Captain Jean Bontemps.

Captain Jean was about five feet in height, and he seemed five feet in thickness. He was propped against a bollard, and he was in his shore-going clothes. The girl's eye told her at once that here was a useful man, a man of authority and knowledge. She approached him, and as he took his pipe from his mouth and removed his cap, she opened her business without parley or hesitation.

She wanted to buy or hire a fishing-boat, price no object.

He did not understand her at first. He seemed suffering from some form of deafness. Then when she repeated the statement, he showed no surprise.

He himself was a fishing-boat owner, Captain Bontemps of the *Arlesienne*, and he was quite willing to sell his boat, for a sum—two thousand pounds he asked, and she did not know that he was speaking in jest, just as one might speak to a child.

"If your boat suits me I will pay what you ask," said she. "Let me see it."

Then it came upon Captain Jean that he was either talking to a lunatic or some wealthy woman with a craze. His sails were taken aback, and he was left wallowing in a heavy ground sea of the mind, with a smell of spice islands tinging the air.

La Belle Arlesienne, his old boat, was not worth a thousand pounds; under the hammer heaven knows what she would have fetched; but she was his wife, or the only female thing that stood in that relationship to him. He tapped the dottle out of his pipe, then he took a pouch from his pocket and began to refill; and the girl, seeing his condition, drew him aside, asking Raft to wait for her.

They went to another bollard, and there the mariner anchoring himself, she began to talk. She introduced herself. He knew all about the *Gaston de Paris* and Mlle. de Bronsart. He put his pipe in his pocket, finding himself in such famous company. She went on. In ten minutes she told him her whole story; told him just what Raft was and just how they stood related, and just how he had been treated in the hotel.

"It's as though they had turned out my father or my brother," said she. "We two who have fought and faced everything together have grown into companions. Friends who cannot be parted, Captain Bontemps. If he were a woman or I a man it would be easier. As it is, things are difficult. Well, I do not care. I will do exactly as I like. I feel you will be my friend, too; you understand me, and I want you to look after him to-night, for in the whole of Marseilles I do not know where he could go, unless to some wretched sailors' home or worse. Ah, it is wicked. Of what use is it to be brave, to be honest, to be true in this world?"

"*Mon Dieu!*" said the Captain. "I will look after him, if for no other reason than that he is what you say, mademoiselle. But *La Belle Arlesienne* is rough; should you use her as a yacht, you would not find her a yacht. She smells of fish——"

"I am used to rough things," said the girl. "I dread the smooth. Captain Bontemps, for one who has done for me everything should I dread anything? And a little roughness, what is that to freedom and the life I have learned to love with the man I love? For I love Raft, Captain Bontemps, just as I know he loves me. Oh, do not mistake me, it is not the sort of thing they call love here amongst houses and streets; it is not a woman that is speaking to you, but a human being."

He understood her. To his broad and simple mind the thing was simple; she did not want to part with the man who had saved her and fought for her, and who had been "chucked out" of an hotel because he was a rough sailor; and marvellously well he understood that when she said she loved Raft she did not mean the thing that the dock-side called love. No Paris poet could have understood her. The old fisher captain did.

But he was a practical man. He struck himself a blow on the head.

"I have what you want," said he. "*La Belle Arlesienne*, no, it is no use; I have something better—a good cruising boat. You say money is no object?"

"None."

"Then come with me, you two."

He led the way, followed by Raft and the girl, to a wharf where a tug lay moored, and by the tug a fifty-ton yawl.

"There's your boat," said Bontemps, "built by Pinoli, of Genoa, for an American. She has even a bathroom and a main cabin with two cabins off it—your man could berth in the fo'c'sle, which is big enough for twenty like him. Follow me."

He led the way on to the deck of the yawl.

The girl went over it, down below into the main cabin with two little sleeping cabins off it. She peeped into the tiny bathroom, examined the pantry, well stored with crockery ware; there was everything, even to the bunk bedding, sheets, and towels. She went to the fo'c'sle—compared with the fo'c'sle of the *Albatross*, it was a little palace.

Then she turned to Raft.

"This is your new home," said she; "there is room for your parrot here." Then, turning to Captain Bontemps, "Well, that is settled, and now I only want a crew and a captain—fishermen. I will have no yachtsmen on my boat. I have had to do with yachtsmen, Captain Bontemps."

"Oh, my faith," said the old fellow, "you will easily find a crew."

"Yes, but I won't easily find a captain. I want you."

The Captain laughed.

"And how about *La Belle Arlesienne?*" asked he.

"You must leave her behind you to be sold. In my service money is no object. Now, as to this boat, who is the agent from whom I can buy her?"

"Latour and Company," replied the old fellow, for the first time in his life in the powerful grip of wealth, and not knowing exactly whether the great golden hand was holding him heels or head up.

"How far is Latour's from here?"

"Not far."

The girl stood for a moment looking round her at the white deck, the masts, the rigging, and as she looked some hand seemed to draw aside a veil, revealing the stupid, immovable houses of the land, filled with stupid, immovable people bound and tied up by soul-killing conventions—and on the other hand the old mystery of ships, those homes of Freedom on the road that has no boundaries.

Then she turned to Bontemps.

"Come," said she, "let us go to Latour's."

"Cléo," said the distracted Mme. de Brie, writing to a friend, "Cléo must always have been as mad as her aunt De Warens. Fishermen, it seems, are the only honest people, and she and her cargo of fishermen, with an old man named Bontemps, are now Heaven knows where since I met them at Portofino.

"She calls them her children, and when I last saw her she was coming along the little quay at Portofino helping that big, red-bearded man to carry provisions.

"The times are revolutionary, that's the truth; and women are not what they were, and I am old, I suppose, and cannot see things as I ought to see them—and the grief is she might have married anyone, she might have married Royalty itself, and I told her so and she laughed in my face. She said she never intended to marry anyone, that she already had a family of 'children,' and that the great bearded man Raft was the smallest of them all; that she was teaching him to read and write and to talk French, so that he could converse with the rest of her family.

"She had made Portofino her headquarters, it seems, and she is the Lady Bountiful of the fishing folk there, sits in their cottages and talks to them, taking up her quarters at the little *auberge*, and sometimes living on board her boat.

"A strange life, and yet she seems happy, like that poor Mlle. La Fontaine, whom I last saw at the Maison de Santé of Dr. Schwanthaller, seated with a straw crown on her head and imagining herself a queen."

EPILOGUE.

ONE glorious summer day, two years later, down in the Lipari Islands, Cléo, by the shore, sat watching *La Belle Arlesienne* as she rode at her anchor. Nothing could be more peaceful than that picture of sea and sky, the craft at anchor, and the little boat now putting off for the shore.

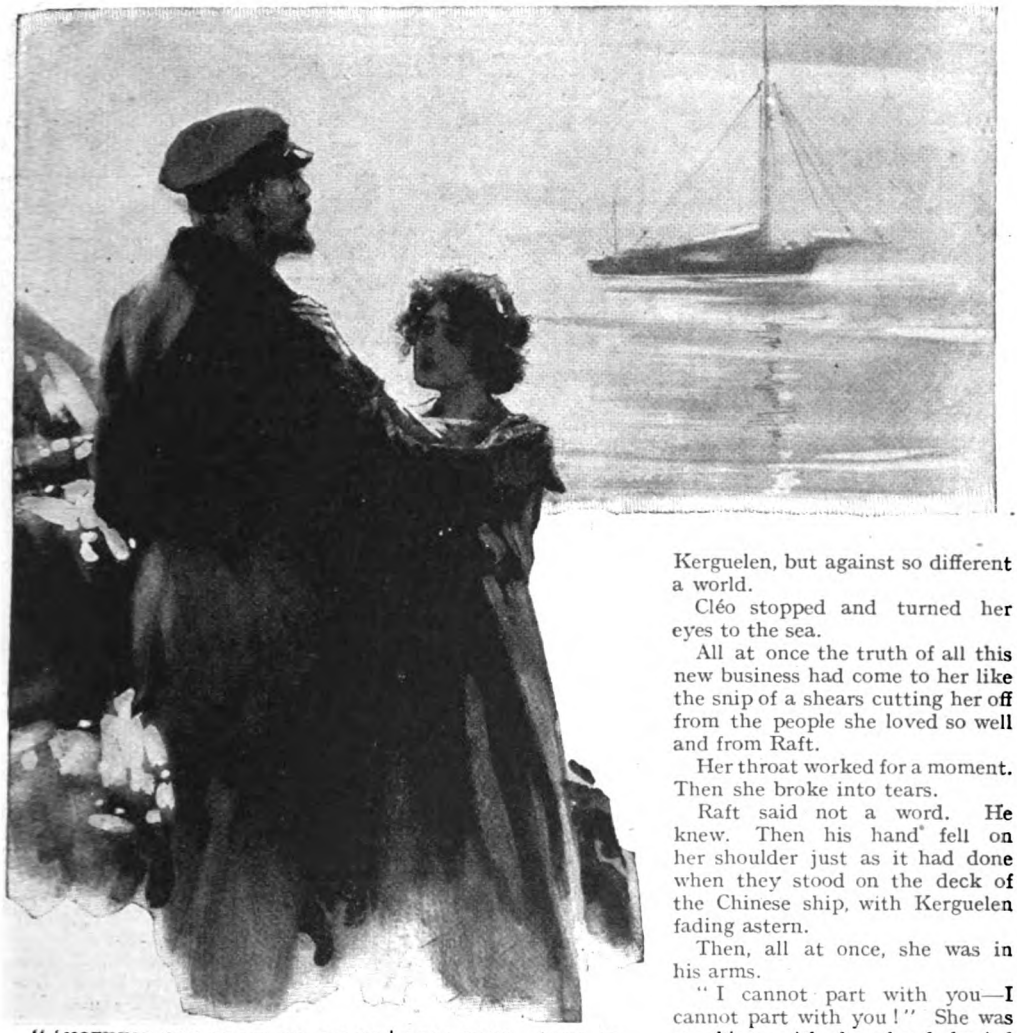
Yet only yesterday an Italian destroyer had brought the news, the news that had now girdled the whole world, even to the plains of India and the cities of Peru.

War!

War between Germany, England, and France.

The little boat touched the beach and Raft stepped out. He was not quite the same man as the Raft of Marseilles. He stood differently, walked differently, spoke differently.

What one saw in him now was Cléo, the refining touch which mind gives to mind, and which alters the whole being as climate alters growth.



"'NOTHING CAN DRIFT US APART,' SAID RAFT. 'BUT IF YOU DIE!' 'THAT WON'T DRIFT US APART."

He came up towards her, and she rose.

"The water is all on board," said Raft, "and there is nothing now but to up anchor."

"Walk a little way with me," said she; "it will be some time before we touch land again, and then it will be France."

He turned with her and they walked along the beach as they had walked along the beach of Kerguelen.

He was off to the war, as were the others, to fight somehow or to help somehow, either in the Navy of France or England, or in the mercantile marine.

Cléo was off to the war, too—to help somehow, with her money as well as her hands.

They passed a little cape and reached a small bay where the gulls flew, just as they flew at Kerguelen, but against so different a world.

Cléo stopped and turned her eyes to the sea.

All at once the truth of all this new business had come to her like the snip of a shears cutting her off from the people she loved so well and from Raft.

Her throat worked for a moment. Then she broke into tears.

Raft said not a word. He knew. Then his hand fell on her shoulder just as it had done when they stood on the deck of the Chinese ship, with Kerguelen fading astern.

Then, all at once, she was in his arms.

"I cannot part with you—I cannot part with you!" She was speaking with her head buried on his shoulder. "Yet I must. It is like death—yet I must."

"I will come back," said Raft, kissing her hair. "We are one—we always were—aye, we always were. Living or dead, it's the same."

"Living or dead," said she. Then, bursting out, "You are mine, you are mine—you and I together—you and I together."

"Aye—aye," said Raft; "nothing can drift us apart."

"But if you die!"

"That won't drift us apart," said Raft. Then, as if speaking through inspiration:—

"I shall come back."

And he did, to a world purged by war, after three years of the dark North Sea—to happiness and that which casts out class-distinction as it casts out fear—Perfect Love.

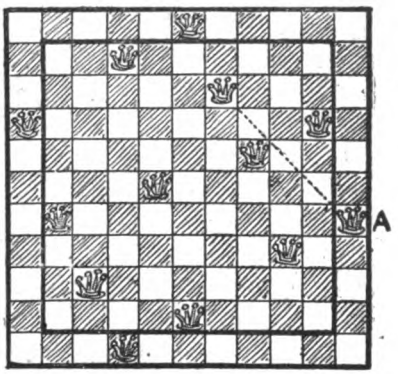
THE END.

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

463.—THE NINE QUEENS.

A CORRESPONDENT at Sydney (J. K. H.) sends me the following original puzzle. Place thirteen queens on a board 11 by 11 so that, wherever we mark off a square 9 by 9, the nine queens contained on it shall all be free from attack by another queen. I have only been able to find one solution to it, but the example



I give is a very "near try" that will serve to make the conditions quite clear. It will be seen that the square 9 by 9 can be marked off in nine different positions, one of which I show. Six of these positions will be quite correct, but the three positions involving the outside right-hand column will fail, because in every case the queen marked A will attack another queen, as shown by the dotted line. Can you find the correct arrangement? If you fail, you will smile when you see the answer.

464.—THE MAN AND THE DOG.

"YES; when I take my dog for a walk," said a mathematical friend, "he frequently supplies me with some interesting puzzle to solve. One day, for example, he waited, as I left the door, to see which way I should go, and when I started he raced along to the end of the road, immediately returning to me; again racing to the end of the road and again returning. He did this four times in all, at a uniform speed, and then ran at my side the remaining distance, which according to my paces measured 27 yards. I afterwards measured the distance from my door to the end of the road and found it to be 625 feet. Now, if I walk 4 miles per hour, what is the speed of my dog when racing to and fro?"

465.—MISSING WORDS.

THE . . . . . men sail around the . . . . .
Eagerly waiting for the . . . . .
To put an end to that dread . . . . .
In which the mate, that fearsome . . . . .
Had tried to prove that . . . . . was . . . . .
Their rum he'd doped and made their . . . . .
A useless thing; they were too . . . . .
To . . . . .

The ten missing words are all in the dictionary and are spelt exactly alike, except that the initial letter is different in every case, as in taste, waste, paste, haste, etc.

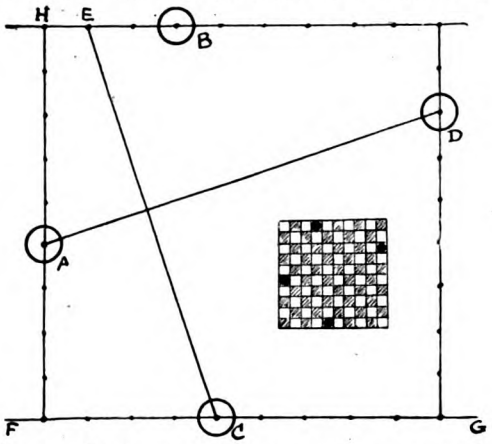
466.—SQUARES AND DIGITS.

WHAT is the smallest square number that terminates with the greatest possible number of similar digits? Thus the greatest possible number might be five and the smallest square number with five similar digits at the end might be 24677777 But this is certainly not a square number. Of course, 0 is not to be regarded as a digit.

Solutions to last Month's Puzzles.

460.—THE FOUR DRAUGHTSMEN.

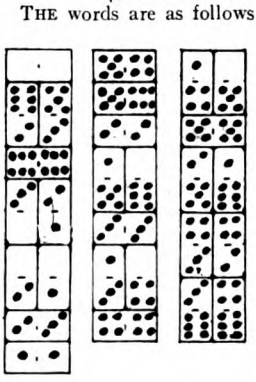
DRAW a line from A to D. Then draw C E perpendicular to A D, and equal in length to A D. Then E will be the centre of another square. Draw a line from E to B and extend it on both sides. Also draw a line F G through C and parallel to E B and the lines through A and D perpendicular to E B and F G



Now, as H is the centre of a corner square, we can mark off the length H E all round the square and we find the board is 10 by 10. If the size of the men were not given we might subdivide into more squares, but the men would be too large for the squares. As the distance between the centres of squares is the same as the width of the squares, we can now complete the board with ease as shown in the diagram inset.

461.—EXPANDING WORDS.

THE words are as follows: a, as, sea, ears, cares, recast, coaster, ancestor, Doncaster, second-rate, consecrated. A new letter is added at each step.



462.—THE DOMINO COLUMN.

PLACE the second column under the first and the third under the second (the column is broken merely for convenience in printing) and the conditions will be found to be fulfilled.

A FINE

HOLIDAY FICTION NUMBER

SEP 12 1919
UNIV. OF MICH.

Preferred Investments:
FRY'S Chocolates and Cocoa
See Page 22.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Charming Love Story by
ETHEL M. DELL

August, 1919.

— A —
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When you have read this copy pass it on to a friend.

No. 344
VOL 58

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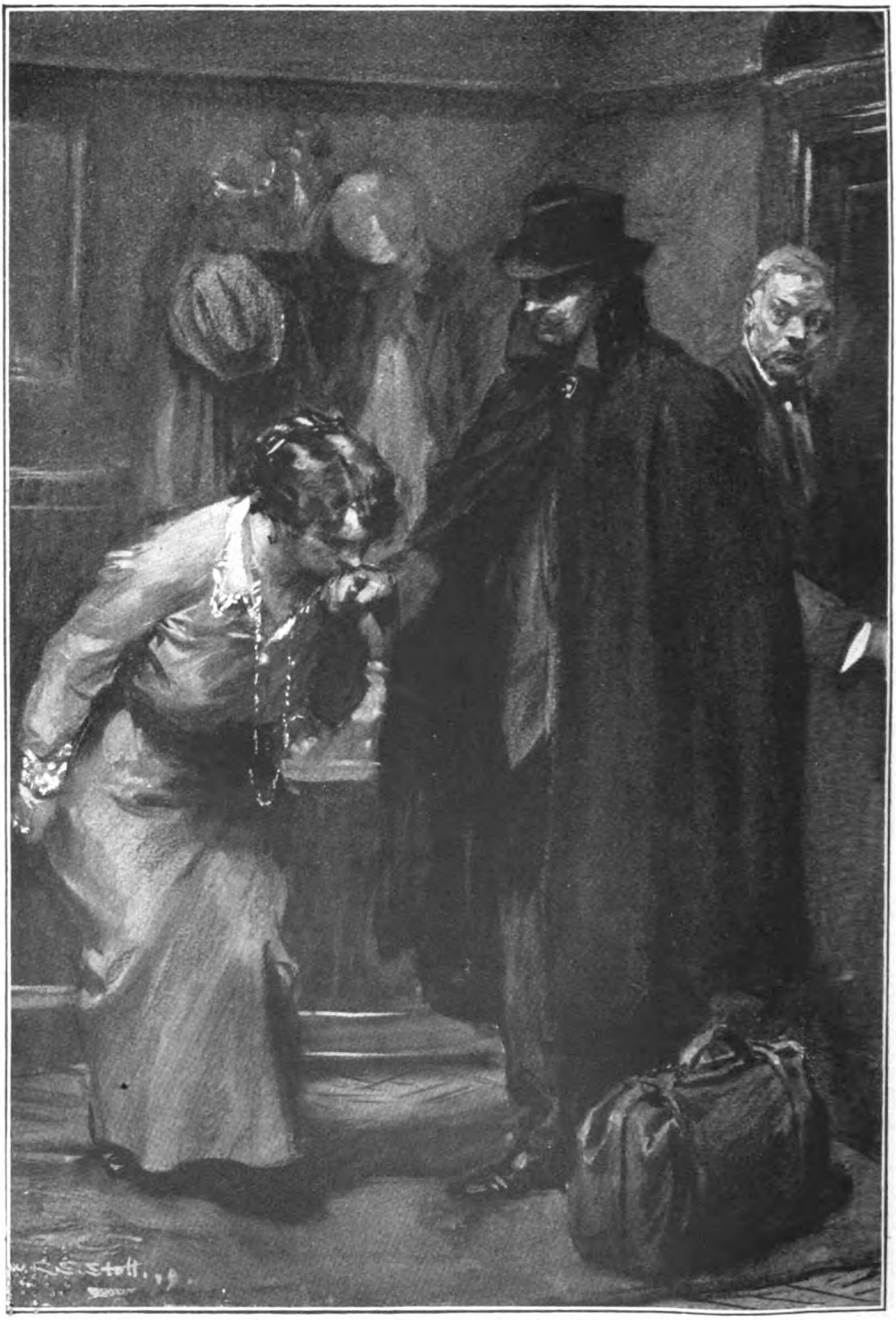

"MRS. MILLER STUMBLED FORWARD, CAUGHT THE STRANGER'S HAND, AND, BENDING, KISSED IT. 'THIS IS THE WAY,' SHE SAID, HUSKILY, AND WENT BEFORE HIM."

(*See page* 108.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Vol. 58. AUGUST, 1919. No. 344.

Mr. Miller & the Kaiser

By

❖ EDGAR ❖ WALLACE

ILLUSTRATED BY W·R·S·STOTT·R·I

AGAINST the day when explorers and archæologists rake over the junk of Britain's forgotten cities, as to-day they rake the mounds where Tarquin lorded it, and reconstruct Etruscan history from her crockery ware, against such a day when paper and parchment and even sheep-skins have perished with the writings and drawings thereon, I trust that Frank O. Miller will inscribe in permanent form the story of his supreme moment, when patriotism overcame sentiment, and duty elbowed his sense of drama into the background.

The loyalty of Frank Oscar Miller transcends all other stories of its kind, for it was loyalty shown long after the last shot was fired and when war was a subject, abhorrent equally to the taxpayer and the magazine editor, and when you might expect a man of romantic character to take a lenient view of his responsibilities to that state in which it had pleased God to place him.

There was a time when Frank O. Miller was just plain Franz Oscar Müller. He had changed his name in the 'nineties, having acquired by marriage service and purchase the business of Sloane Miller, Limited. It was in deference to his father-in-law's wishes, who, having no son, desired the perpetuation of his name, that Franz O. became Frank O.

The company had prospered exceedingly. The Sloane Miller building, with its twelve floors and its gilded cupola, is a monument to Millerian industry. The Miller demesne at Hampstead is a palace, and Mrs. Miller's emeralds, which are kept, according to all accounts, in a small safe between the twin beds in Mr. and Mrs. Miller's gorgeous bedroom, are worth a king's ransom.

Incidentally, many men who were in no ways interested in securing the liberty of distressed monarchs had attempted to prove that assertion. But Mr. Miller was a pretty handy man with a gun. His safe was electrically controlled, and after Pal Morris, Lew Jakobs, and "Flash" Joe had successively made their attempts, had failed, and had passed to their country homes, it was agreed in the circles whence they came that Mrs. Miller's emeralds were not perhaps worth trying for. Even "Snakie" Smith, Unelected President of the Guild, and swellest and cleverest of all the mobsmen, turned down the proposition without looking at it, though he might as well have tried because he was caught a few weeks later in compromising circumstances (and a bank vault) and went out of town.

This was in the year of grace 1909, and the emeralds have increased in value and size and general magnificence, and the Sloane Miller building has risen, and Mr. Miller himself has grown stouter since then, and the first Mrs. Miller has died and has been succeeded by the second Mrs. Miller (born Stohwasser).

Miller was always British in sentiment, and genuinely so. No suspicion ever attached to him. He subscribed heavily for War stock, gave

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largely to all the war charities, and if he had had one son he would have sent him with the first divisions to fight for freedom. Unhappily, he was childless.

He was sitting in his library one night in the early part of this year, when Jackie Strauss came in, dropped his hat on the floor, hunched himself into the corner of a settee, and swore thickly through his cigar. Mr. Miller looked over his spectacles at his old friend.

"What's wrong, Jackie?" he asked.

Jackie growled something, and a slow smile spread over the placid face of the head of the Sloane Miller Corporation, for that day he had pulled off a business deal, beating his competitors to the wire, and the chief of his competitors was the Strauss Machinery Trust, Limited. But it was evidently not the successful rivalry of his friend which disturbed Mr. Strauss.

"We've won the war, haven't we?" he demanded, fiercely, and he was evidently speaking under the stress of a strong emotion. "We've got Germany like that," he put his big thumb down suggestively. "Ain't that so? Well, why don't we leave 'em alone? See here, Franz, I'm British. To me there isn't a country like this in the world—though they tried to intern me. The only time I have been in Germany in the last twenty years I was treated like a criminal. But you've got to admit, Franz, he's the Big Man. He may have made this war or he may not. But he *did* make Germany big."

Mr. Miller took off his glasses, folded them slowly, and put them in his waistcoat pocket. He looked at his companion dubiously and thoughtfully, and rubbed his nose with the knuckle of his forefinger, a sure sign of his perturbation. There was no need to ask who "he" was. He knew instinctively, and there was a little echo of approval in the secret deeps of his mind.

"Don't talk like that in front of Bertha," he said, after a while. "Bertha is——" he hesitated.

Loyalty to his wife prevented his completing the sentence.

"Well, she's never been wholly with us, Jackie, as you well know."

Mr. Strauss nodded.

"I won't say that you're not right," Mr. Miller went on. "I don't like to see a man kicked when he's down, but I'm British first, Jackie."

"Ain't I?" demanded Jackie, truculently, his grey-shot moustache bristling; "but I've got something here," he pounded his spotted waistcoat with his fists, "right down inside me that makes me go just cold and sick when I hear these fools, who never had an original thought in their lives, talking about trying him and hanging him! I'm a Brandenburger, Franz. My relations for hundreds of years have been Brandenburgers. It's in my blood and soul, this feeling for—for him. I don't care if he's guilty as hell. I don't care if we suck Germany dry, if we chuck her fleet on the muck-heap—I'm for him!"

Mr. Miller shifted uneasily. He had his own feelings, for his ancestry went back to the Mark, and the best-known of his ancestors had been body-servant to the Great Elector himself.

"Don't say anything in front of Bertha about this," he repeated, mildly.

"Why not? And don't say anything about what?" asked a voice behind him, and he turned to meet the cold eye of Bertha Miller (*née* Stohwasser), who never called herself anything but Müller.

She was a good-looking woman in the early forties, dark, swarthy, cold of eye and manner, and now she looked from her husband to his guest.

"Jackie's been talking—politics," said Mr. Miller, feebly.

"I heard. Who is the 'he' you're speaking about?" she asked.

"Oh, never mind," said Mr. Strauss, loyally. "I hear you got that contract to-day, Franz"

"You were talking about the Emperor," said Mrs. Miller, not to be put off, "and I agree with you, Jackie. It's an abominable shame, the way people are talking. There isn't a worse-represented man in the world."

"Let's have some coffee," said Mr. Miller, hastily, "and for Heaven's sake, Bertha, get off that subject."

"You know it," she accused, "but you haven't the spirit of Jack Strauss. I can't understand how you can stand by and hear these people abuse him. I told that wretched woman, Sanderson, to-day just what I thought of her when she said they ought to hang him."

"Oh, lord," said Mr. Miller, in dismay, "why don't you keep your mouth shut? I'm a business man, and I can't afford to have my business ruined, and ruined it will be if your views get about. People will say they are mine."

"Pah!" said the wife of his bosom, contemptuously, and addressed herself to Mr. Strauss. "It breaks my heart every time I think of it," she said, passionately; "I can hardly let my mind dwell on it. Think of it, Jackie! He who has had all the kings of Europe at his feet, who had only to lift his hand to have the world shake, who put Germany high amongst the nations, and is now an exile in a little Dutch village, lonely——"—her voice choked.

Mr. Miller, looking from her to his friend, saw a light in the eye of Jackie which he had not seen before, a suppressed eagerness which was more eloquent than speech—saw him lean forward and lay his hand on Mrs. Miller's arm.

"But is he?" he asked, softly.

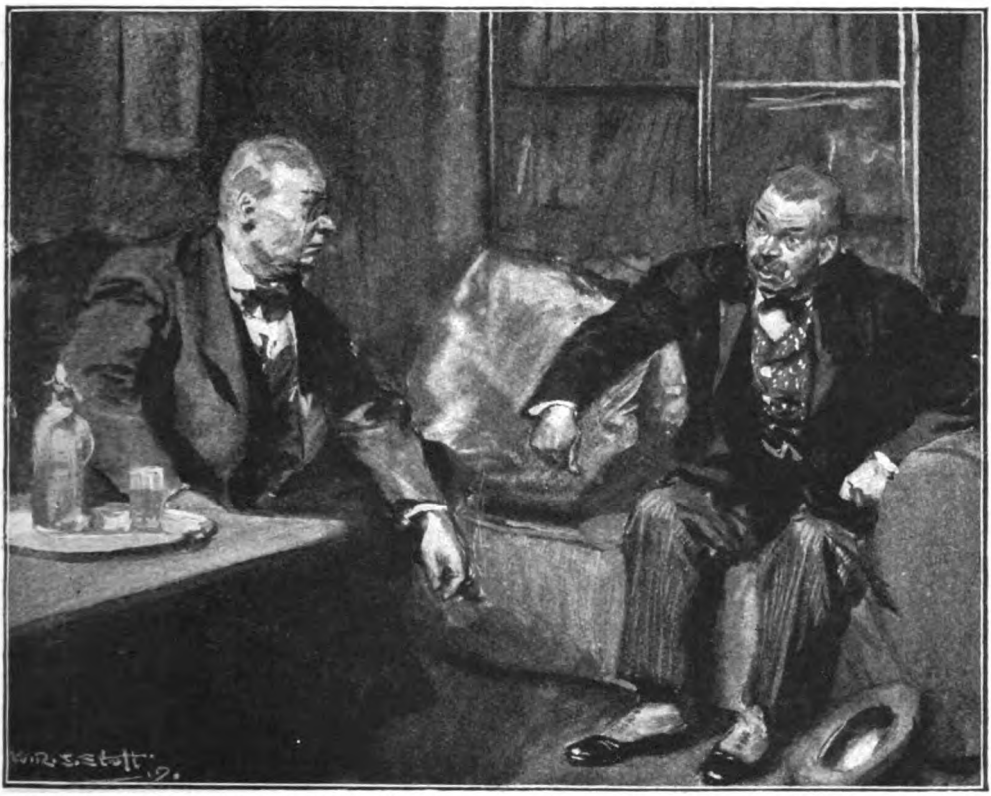
"Is he what?" she answered, her handkerchief half-way to her eyes.

"Is he at Amerongen?"

She dropped her hands on her lap and stared at him.

"What do you mean?"

"I wasn't going to tell you," said Strauss, speaking quickly, "but I guess it's got to come out, and I know I can trust you both. Who has seen the Kaiser at Amerongen? Nobody! The reporters have stood at the gates and have



"'WE VE WON THE WAR, HAVEN T WE ?' HE DEMANDED, FIERCELY. 'WE VE GOT GERMANY LIKE THAT,' HE PUT HIS BIG THUMB DOWN SUGGESTIVELY. 'AIN T THAT SO ?' "

seen somebody in a grey cloak. But who has seen his face ? A few villagers who have never seen the Emperor in their lives, and they only know it's him because they are told. Who, who has seen the Emperor in the life, has seen him at Amerongen ? Nobody ! We only know he's there because we are told he's there."

"What do you mean ?" asked Mrs. Miller again, her breath coming faster.

Strauss drew his chair nearer to her and lowered his voice.

"I'll tell you," he said. "One of my cashiers, a man named Tells, embezzled nearly a thousand pounds from me. That was five years ago. He was arrested and sent to penal servitude for five years. He was a married man, and I did all I could for him, and I told him when he came out of prison he was to come and see me. He turned up last week——" He paused impressively.

"Well ?" said Mr. Miller, not the least interested of the two.

"I don't think he'll go straight. He's got into pretty bad company," Strauss went on; "in fact, he is already a member of a gang, working under 'Snakie' Smith. You have heard of him ! He's the biggest thing in the criminal world, and he came out of prison a week before Tells. Now, these criminals," he went on, speaking slowly and with emphasis, "have an intelligence organization of their own. There is hardly a Government secret that they're not up to, and lately some of them have been approached to shepherd a mysterious man who is coming from the Continent and is on his way to America."

Mr. Miller rose quickly.

"Pshaw-!" he said. "Impossible ! Why should they engage those kind of fellows to look after—— ? Bah ! It's ridiculous !"

He was agitated, and showed it.

Mrs. Miller sat with her bright eyes fixed upon Strauss. She was in a rosy dream of glory, in that glow of exaltation which the novice before the altar, or the Eastern bride meeting her lover for the first time face to face, might experience.

"Go on," she whispered.

"Who could better look after him than these men who spend their lives dodging the police ?" said Mr. Strauss, speaking rapidly, "and I tell you that the Emperor is not in Holland. Tells hinted at it."

"Rubbish !" said Miller, his voice quavering. "Would they put him at the mercy of a bunch of crooks ? Why, at any moment, any one of them might go to the police !"

"And be dead in twenty-four hours," said Mr. Strauss, grimly; "you know their code, that class of person. I have looked up Smith's

record. He is the very man who would undertake this work; a daring, resourceful man, with a good manner. He has been in every big crime that has been committed in this city since he was a boy of fifteen."

Mrs. Miller sighed, the long happy sigh of a dreamer.

"He may come here—to London . . . . Wonderful! Wonderful!"

"Dam' stupid!" snapped Miller. "I tell you I'm not in this, Strauss. I am real genuine British. They've treated me decently. The laws of this country are my laws, the enemies of this country are my enemies."

His wife turned in a fury.

"And you can say that, you can say that!" she hissed, "you a Brandenburger at heart! Don't you feel—doesn't your heart leap at the very thought of it?"

"No," said Mr. Miller, truthfully.

This was the guilty secret which he carried to his office, which walked at his elbow in the crowded street, which sat at the opposite side of his desk in his suite on the eighth floor of the Sloane Miller building. He saw Jackie Strauss the next day and purposely avoided him. He gave up eating at his favourite restaurant in Piccadilly and patronized the less fashionable Soho, where he knew Jackie, with his luxurious taste, would not venture.

Mrs. Miller saw Jackie frequently. She had consultations with him, and they met at lunches and at teas. Once at dinner in the family mansion, when the servants had been dismissed, she started in to tell her husband.

"Jackie thinks——" she began, and Franz Miller dropped his knife and fork with a crash.

"I don't want to know what Jackie thinks," he said, sternly; "now, get that stuff out of your mind, Bertha. If you insist upon remaining a German, remember that a German woman's first duty is obedience to her husband."

"But I want to tell you!"

"I don't want to know," roared Mr. Miller, purple of face, and emphasizing his words with thunderous smacks on the table. "I tell you I don't want to know. You're mad, Bertha, stark, staring, raving mad."

"He's not at Amerongen," blurted his wife, triumphantly.

"He may be with the devil for all I care," roared Miller. "Perhaps you are right, perhaps that crazy story is true, but I tell you I don't want to know, and if you don't stop talking I'll, I'll——"

He looked so ferocious, and his hand clutched the plate so convulsively, that his wife wilted. He apologized for his anger after dinner, and she received his apology meekly.

The Millers made a point of retiring for the night at 11.30, and Franz was smoking his last cigar and reading for the last time the closing prices, when the butler came into the room.

"There's a man who wishes to see you, sir."

Mr. Miller had a sinking sensation at the pit of his stomach.

"Er—a man," he stammered.

He did not look at his wife, for he could almost feel the emanation of her radiant mind.

"Rather a tough-looking fellow, sir. He wants to see you privately."

Miller hesitated.

"Show him in here," he said.

"Perhaps——" whispered a voice at his elbow.

"Be silent, woman!" he thundered.

It was a relief to hear the sound of his own harsh, aggressive voice, and he found courage in his own violence.

The man who followed the butler was certainly not the man Mr. Miller dreaded to see. He was a short, bull-necked fellow, with keen, intelligent eyes, and a straight line of mouth. He waited till the butler had retired.

"I've got a message for you," he said, gruffly. "I dare say you've seen me before."

"I don't know—who are you? asked Mr. Miller, suspiciously.

The man looked round to see that the door was closed.

"I am 'Snakie' Smith," he said.

"Yes, yes," broke in Mrs. Miller, impetuously; "have you a message?"

The man searched his pockets, produced a large white envelope and handed it to the reluctant Mr. Miller.

"Say," he said, confidentially, "I'm not in this. You don't know me. See? If anybody asks you whether 'Snakie' Smith has been, you have never heard of me!"

"No, of course not," said the woman, eagerly.

"Will you be quiet, Bertha?" demanded Mr. Miller, angrily. "Why should I compromise myself? What is this letter about?"

He did not open it, he dared not open it, and the messenger, noting his agitation, grinned.

"So long," he said, with a familiar nod of his head and, swinging round, stepped quickly into the hall, where the butler was waiting him, and they heard the thud of the street door close behind him.

Mr. Miller turned the letter over and over. It was addressed to him in a large, sprawling, and unmistakably German hand.

"Open it, Franz," said his wife, in an agony of suspense.

Mr. Miller took a long breath and opened the envelope. The sheet which he extracted was of heavy paper, and on the top left-hand corner was a double-eagle, embossed in black. He adjusted his glasses with trembling fingers and read:

"At 11.30 to-night there will arrive one who has no home but the hearts of his people. Give him your hospitality for three nights before he passes on."

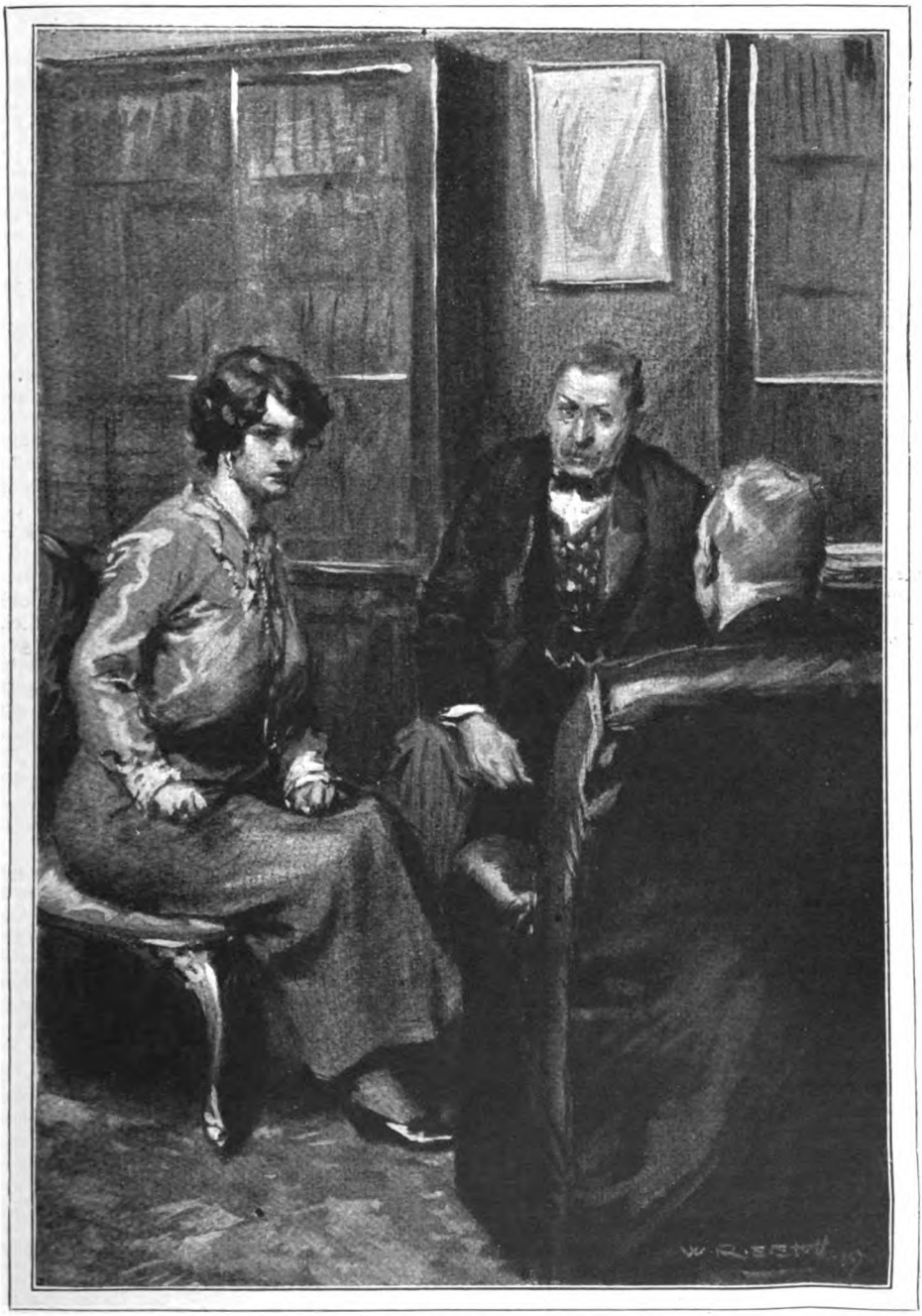
He read it three times and handed the letter to his wife. She stood rapt, transfigured, her eyes fixed upon the page.

"It's true," she whispered. "My God! It's true! How wonderful!"

Miller stood, a helpless, ludicrous figure, his mouth agape, his pale blue eyes wandering about the room, then—

"I've got to do it!" he said, hoarsely, "I've got to do it!"

He turned his pale face to his wife.



"'I WASN'T GOING TO TELL YOU,' SAID STRAUSS, 'BUT I GUESS IT'S GOT TO COME OUT, AND I KNOW I CAN TRUST YOU BOTH. WHO HAS SEEN THE KAISER AT AMERONGEN? NOBODY!'"

"Send the servants to bed," he said; "tell them we have a guest. He must have the best room in the house. Will you——"

"I'll see to it. I'll see to it," she said, in a choked voice, and flew from the room.

He sat heavily down in a low chair, his head between his hands, bewildered, crushed. It seemed that the whole direction of his ordered life had been taken from his hands. He was in the grip of a force and a power stronger, more infallible than reason. This was Fate, Kismet, the Inevitability which was more tremendous

than his will could harness. It crept over him, this new spirit of servitude, this atavistic impulse to obey. The blood of dead generations of Müllers who had buckled on their swords and tramped to the red West at the word of their sovereign lord sung through his veins, but to him the song was a dirge.

It was a quarter to twelve when the sound of a motor-car coming up the drive brought him to his feet. The car stopped before the house. There was a little interval and then a bell tinkled. He himself went to the hall and threw open the door.

The car was moving on as he did so, but a man was standing in the entrance, a medium-sized man, covered from shoulder to heel in a long black cloak, a soft felt hat of the same hue was pulled over his eyes, and in one hand he carried a battered portmanteau.

Mr. Miller mumbled something and bowed from his hip downward. He had never bowed like that before, but he knew that he must do so. The stranger stepped into the hall without a word and the door was closed and bolted behind him.

Mrs. Miller was in the open doorway of the library. She stumbled forward, caught the stranger's hand and, bending, kissed it.

"This is the way," she said, huskily, and went before him, Mr. Miller bringing up the rear.

The stranger stripped his cloak with his right hand—they noticed that he kept his left in his pocket—and with the same motion took off his hat. Tears blinded the woman. She could only see the dim outlines of a well-beloved face.

Mr. Miller, though his pulse was beating a tattoo, noted the sallowness, the trim up-turned moustache, less exaggerated than he had expected, the tired eyes, the firm chin, the hair brushed straight back from the forehead.

"Is—would you like something to take?" he asked, shakily; "would your Majesty——"

The stranger raised his hand.

"You will please not use that word," he said, and his voice was gentle and sad. "I fear I am embarrassing you."

"No, no, certainly not," gasped Mr. Miller; "would you like some wine?"

The stranger shook his head.

"I am very tired," he said; "perhaps you would show me to my room. I am afraid I have not a servant."

His smile was very sweet. As he stooped to pick up the bag Mrs. Miller made a movement to forestall him.

"No, no," he said, gently, "I can manage myself. I must not be a greater trouble to you than I can help."

"It is no trouble, oh, I assure you it is no trouble," she cried. "If Excellenz——"

"You must give me no title—please," he said, and he inclined his head toward the door.

She led the way up the stairs, though her knees were shaking under her, and again Mr. Miller brought up the rear.

"I could ask no better than this," said the man.

He had been wearing under his cloak a stained grey uniform that fitted him like a glove. It was plain, without any ornament or decoration, but it was unmistakable.

"I came on a tramp steamer," he said; "it was rather—uncomfortable."

He dismissed them with a bow, and with no further word, and they went down together and sat for two hours facing one another, speechless.

At 2.30 Mr. Miller rose.

"I am going to bed," he said, heavily; "you have arranged——"

She nodded.

"I will see to his breakfast myself; nobody is to go into the room. I have told Parker and he will tell the servants that it is a friend who is ill."

"So?" said Mr. Miller, and mounted to bed, but not to sleep.

He went to his office the next morning, a criminal in mind and, if truth be told, in appearance. He lunched at a restaurant even more remote than any he had yet patronized. Somehow he dreaded returning to his secret, and, dismissing his car, he made a leisurely way homeward by motor bus.

Mrs. Miller was a very subdued, silent woman, but the fit of exaltation was still on her. She walked and moved as one who had seen a vision; was laconic but humble. When she spoke of the stranger her voice dropped to a pitch of reverence.

"I have only seen him for a little while," she said; "I took his lunch and breakfast to him. To-night when the servants are in bed he wishes to take a stroll in the grounds. Will you—will you accompany him?"

"No," said Mr. Miller, shortly. He gulped. "No," he repeated. Then the grip of the old service fastened about his neck. "Yes, I will," he said.

It was a melancholy exercise, for neither spoke. The stranger walked a little in advance, his head bowed, his mind evidently occupied. As for Mr. Miller, he was torn between his old devotion and his new allegiance.

"I'm British!" he kept muttering to himself, as though it were some magic incantation which, repeated often enough, would restore his equilibrium.

The second day was a repetition of the first, but at nine o'clock came a diversion. Another stranger called, a clean-shaven, alert-looking man, who craved a private interview, and was ushered into the library, Mr. Miller quaking with apprehension.

"Sorry to bother you at this hour of the night, Mr. Miller," said the stranger, briskly. "My name is Floyd. I am from Scotland Yard."

Franz did not faint. He stretched out an unsteady hand and caught the back of a chair for support.

"Oh, yes," he said, faintly; "a detective?"

"That's it, sir," said the brisk stranger. "It has been reported to me that an old friend of mine was seen giving your house a look-over the other day."

"The other day?" repeated Mr. Miller, mechanically.

"Four or five days ago," said the detective, and Mr. Miller breathed more freely. "He's a

well-known thief, named Smith—'Snakie' Smith; you may have heard of him."

"Oh, yes," said Mr. Miller; "Smith—er—did come to the house at—er—my invitation."

"At your invitation?"

"Yes," said the other. "The fact is, Mr. Floyd, I am—er—trying to reform him, getting him to go straight."

Floyd smiled indulgently as a mother might smile at the fancies of her child.

"Reforming him, eh? Well, you've got some job! He's a bad boy, Mr. Miller. He's the man who got away with Mabel Joyce's tiara, the actress, you know. He was in the same company."

"I've heard about it," said the desperate Mr. Miller, "but I really think he is reforming now."

"'IS THAT SCOTLAND YARD?' HE ASKED. 'I HAVE GOT A MAN HERE YOU WANT.'"

"You'll find it an expensive process," said Floyd, grimly.

He took his leave, but the relief at his departure was nothing like the relief that Mr. Miller felt that the police had noted the arrival of "Snakie" Smith but had not observed The Man. He must be warned. If the police were watching "Snakie," sooner or later they would hit upon their greatest discovery.

But he had no opportunity of warning. He could only tell his wife, and somehow he had got out of the habit of discussing things with his wife and had hardly spoken to her since the stranger had arrived. Yet he managed to convey something of his fears to her. He came back earlier the next day, and if she had been exalted before she was now so beyond recognition. She hardly waited for the door to close on him before she told her news.

"He is leaving to-night, Franz," she whispered. "A car will call for him at eleven. He is going West . . . on to America. He has friends there. Oh, and Franz, don't think that everything is lost. He has loyal friends, they are working for him, Franz, and he will come to his own. He will wrest from their hands everything they have stolen from him. In a few years, Franz, he will be great again, and you and I——"

"Great again?" said Mr. Miller, dully; "great! That is war!"

She babbled more news, but he did not hear it. All that he realized was war and what it meant, the wrecked lives, the maimed bodies, the sufferings, and a coming again of that hideous nightmare—war!

He did not speak through dinner. He sat hunched up in his chair while she talked in low, fierce tones, and the hands of the clock went round. Why, it was a crime! It was a sin, the most damnable sin that had ever been committed, and he was a participant in the villainy!

There would be more war, more dead, more poor maimed, blind souls groping and groaning through the world!

He leapt up with a strangled cry and stumbled across the table to the telephone. His wife stared at him.

"What are you doing?"

He did not reply to her; his trembling hands turned the pages of the Telephone Directory, and presently he called for a number.

"What are you doing?" she asked again.

"Is that Scotland Yard?" he asked. "It is Mr. Miller speaking, of Sloane Miller, Limited. Yes, I am speaking from my house. I have got a man here you want."

She leapt up at him like a tigress and knocked the telephone from his hand.

"You sha'n't, you sha'n't!" she screamed. "You traitor! You traitor! I'm going to warn him!"

She took two steps, but he was after her, had swung her round and had thrown her sprawling on to the couch.

"You stay here," he said, breathlessly. "You stay with me here. Don't you move!"

"I'll scream!" she whimpered. "You traitor! Your name will be execrated . . ." She raved on, but he stood between her and the door to the hall.

He looked at the clock on the mantelpiece. It showed ten minutes to eleven. Then there came to his strained ears the "Chuff! Chuff!" of two motor bicycles.

His wife was as white as death. She sat glaring at him till he almost collapsed under the strain of her fanatical hate. Then the door opened, and it was Floyd who came in.

Mr. Miller tried to speak but could not. He raised his hand to his trembling lips to steady them.

"There's a man you want," he said, and got no farther, for at that moment the second door to the room opened and the stranger came in.

He was carrying his bag, his cloak was on his shoulders, and at the sight of Floyd he stood stock still.

"I want you, 'Snakie,'" said Floyd, and his automatic pistol covered the other.

"Well, well, well," said the Kaiser, "if it isn't Floyd!"

Both his hands were in the air now as he walked calmly toward them. He gazed benevolently from the shaking Mr. Miller to his speechless wife.

"And which of you unpatriotic devils put your Kaiser away?" he asked, in elegant English.

Mr. Floyd saw a bulge in the stranger's pocket, and unceremoniously put in his hand and drew forth that which restored Mrs. Miller to speech. It was a large handful of priceless emeralds.

"You nearly got away with it, too," said Floyd, admiringly. "Well, you are certainly the boy!"

The Kaiser smiled pleasantly.

"Have you got a friend outside?" he asked.

Floyd nodded.

"I'm sorry," said the man. "Do you mind if I take my moustache off?—it tickles. I am afraid you owe me an apology, Mr. Miller," he said; "that you should imagine the bull-necked tough I sent to you was me hurts my pride."

There was a sound of motor wheels.

"Stocky Jones and Tells, I suppose?" suggested Mr. Floyd, with an inquiring jerk of his head to the sound; "they've been working with you. That car will come in handy," he added. "Pick up your bag, 'Snakie,' you don't suppose I'm going to valet you, do you?"

They went out together, leaving a very silent couple.

It was Mr. Miller who spoke first.

"Bertha," he said, clearing his voice, "you didn't kiss his hand before he went!"

He felt he was entitled to that one.

ACROSTICS.

With Acrostic No. 67, printed below, our twelfth series of six acrostics begins. Prizes to the value of twelve guineas will be awarded to the most successful solvers.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 67.

Here, in London's famous street,
Wealth and fashion we can meet.
Piccadilly, at the end,
Shows the curve we may ascend;
Oxford Circus, further on,
Shows the journey nearly done.

1. Fours, and threes, and twos, and ones,
So the batsman scores his ——.
2. Bread, or fruit, or fish, or meat,
What is food is good to ——.
3. Harness, tackle, dress appear
More or less the same as ——.
4. Though no view it can espy,
Every needle has an ——.
5. Here is something someone wrote,
Letter, or perhaps a ——.
6. Closely fitting, that is right:
What is never loose is ——.

PAX.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 68.

On either side the name we note
Of tragedy that Shakespeare wrote.

1. Man, go: and with you take your fruit.
2. Grave, circumflex, or else acute.
3. Money: or, lacking head, a tree.
4. Beautiful should the lady be.
5. A snaky fish, a little word.
6. Possessed by fish, and beast, and bird.
7. Lastly, appears upon the scene
Hero—and also heroine.

PAX.

Answers to Nos. 67 and 68 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, The Strand Magazine, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on August 12th.

The answer to each acrostic must be on a separate piece of paper; a second solution may be sent to any or every light, and should be written at the side of the first one; at the foot of their answers solvers should write their pseudonyms and nothing else. These pseudonyms should in no case exceed one word.

Answer to No. 63.

1.	L	ongbo	W
2.	O	tt	O
3.	N	ekka	R
4.	G	oather	D
5.	F	rabjou	S
6.	E	r	W
7.	L	ut	O
8.	L	araco	R
9.	O	que	T
10.	W	entwort	H

Notes.—Light 2. Otto the Great, cotton, otto of roses. 3. To be so; Bootes; Nekkar, the star Beta Bootis. 4. Goatherd win. dragon white, anagrams. 5. Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking Glass*. 6. Otherwise, else. 7. Disc, Dis, Pluto. 8. Dean Swift, Stella, Vanessa. 9. Parroquet, wanting Parr: a toque may become its wearer. 10. Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford. Change N. to W.—Nansen went North. Stafford.

Who Has the Best Time —a Man or a Woman?

Is the man, with his daily worries and his greater freedom, or the woman, with her comparative serenity of life and perhaps some monotony, the happier person? "Men," said John Oliver Hobbes, "with more liberty than women, have many more opportunities of coming to disaster.' Much more is expected of them in the way of hard work. No domestic, no romantic affection, no pursuit, no vice, no amusement, no interest can compensate a man for being a failure—according to his luck—in the judgment of his fellows. Against the battles of men, what of the loneliness of many women, their secret discontents, cares, sorrows, and desires? What of their social and domestic worries? Worries about marrying and not marrying, about husbands, children, servants, dressmakers, and nerves? Women, however, have the better time, for they live and die in the belief that they bring all the joy and atone for all the woe of this sinful world."

The above quotation was submitted by us to a number of eminent men and women, whose views on the question "Who has the best time—a man or a woman?" make a most interesting symposium.

THE VERY REV. J. E. WELLDON— DEAN OF DURHAM.

IT is not easy to answer in a sentence the question of my dear friend — John Oliver Hobbes, whose untimely death was an irreparable loss to me and many others—whether a man or a woman enjoys the better time in life. Some men are, of course, happier than women; some women happier than men. But it is, I am afraid, the fact that, in the past, more of life's blessings and less of its sufferings have fallen to the lot of manhood than of womanhood. If freedom, knowledge, interest in public affairs, variety of occupation, the chance of getting on in the world, and the opportunity of self-gratification without paying the cost of it, are regarded as advantages, then men have been better off than women. Among uncivilized people women are generally the slaves of men; nor have they as yet risen in all so-called civilized countries to an equality with men. It has even been doubted whether women possessed minds or souls. But there is no more convincing a test of social progress than the respect paid to womanhood. I rejoice therefore in knowing that in Great Britain not only are women now highly educated, but that they are, or are coming to be, admitted to all the great professions, and that they are now invested with the political franchise. I believe they will exercise their power in behalf of great moral causes, such as temperance and purity. But it is impossible that they should ever rival men in a battle of physical strength, or that they should

ever be relieved from the sacred pains which they bear in virtue of their sex for the good and the very life of the world. The troubles and sorrows of men are probably more frequent, but they are less acute or profound than those of women.

Upon the whole, then, I conclude that men have, and must have, a better time than women, if by better time is meant a life of greater activity with less depth of suffering; but if it is the service of humanity which constitutes a better time, then women are at least the equals of men.

FATHER BERNARD VAUGHAN.

YOU ask me "who has the best time—a man or a woman?" After a long and wide experience of both men and women I am satisfied that among men, zealous and self-sacrificing priests have the best time, and among women, that nuns, for instance, Sisters of Charity, and the Little Sisters of the Poor, have the best of time.

Some of your readers will set me down as a raving lunatic or as a blithering idiot for venturing to make such a statement. As a matter of fact, it is quite indifferent to me what judgment they form upon my verdict in the matter. I can only give you a straightforward answer to a very definite question. Nuns, I find, always and everywhere, whether among the poor sick or the poor children, bright, cheery, contented, and happy. Not only do they seem glad and joyous, but they are so. What is more, they feel assured of a still brighter and happier eternity before them. As for my brother priests, I can only say that they are the best contented men and the cheeriest company I have yet discovered on this planet.

I have been a Jesuit for more than fifty years, and if I were to start life again I should begin again in a Jesuit novitiate. I am no richer, personally, than when I began, I have no ambition but for God's glory and the good of my neighbour. When God rings me up to give an account of my stewardship I shall just drop this vesture of clay, so to speak, my overalls, and answer the bell. My ambition is for a non-stop flight from earth to Heaven. If I have to stop *en route*, still, I shall get there. Every man and woman who believe they are going to live with God in Heaven must be happy. Some people may consider we are fools for this belief, but, having it, we cannot but have a good time with the prospect of a better eternity.

MAX PEMBERTON.

THE woman, unquestionably. She rarely has a man's responsibilities and she is not often given to worry. A woman is the essence of a good time. She was born to enjoy herself, and will do so even when climbing upon a crowded omnibus. Most of them go through life laughing. The income-tax collector sees them in a nightmare. The devil gives it up as a bad job and is learning to jazz. It is a beautiful thing to be the only woman in the world—and they all are that. Yet, with true feminine perversity, they sometimes wish they were men. Perhaps not so frequently in these piping times of Peace. War gave them liberty; they have discovered themselves. Even Mr. Justice Darling cannot intimidate them. A poet once called them "lesser men"—but he had never been driven by a Venus in a side-car from the Hotel Cecil to God knows where!

E. TEMPLE THURSTON.

UNLESS a woman takes a deep and creative interest in her home, it would seem that in the very easiness of her life she has a harder time than any man. It must be hard indeed to kill time, for it has the life of a cat. It must be hard to find enjoyment, for the very search for it rouses it to the quality of elusiveness. Without that exchange of creative interest in her home it must be inestimably difficult to always be receiving and never to give. To those who give in kind what a man gives in fact, life would appear to be an equal sharing of burdens, an equal realization of interest and joy.

MORLEY ROBERTS.

THERE is something wrong with the way this question has been put. We should rather ask "who has the least bad time, man or woman?"

It must take an impassioned social optimist, which is as much as to say a victim of a rare kind of lunacy, to assert that anyone has a really good time in Western civilization. Few of us even know what a good time is. We are all, men and women alike, boys and girls alike, the victims of an absurd, unstable civilization which really only fits those who have grown old in it and have been ground down into semi-human shapes which are but parodies of what mankind should be. Youth is always struggling for life and that freedom for the instincts which is liberty, but who can attain it after suffering under the slave drivers known as school masters and mistresses, who are themselves distorted, atrophied, and ridiculous? The English home itself is still the last refuge of decayed moral maxims, and the best that can be said for it is that it founded the British Empire by driving every boy with a spark of spirit away from England.

Some people tell us men have a good time, whatever happens to women. Those who look around may well wonder if this is so. The predominant expression in London or any other city of the West is anxiety. We see it on almost all men's faces. It cannot be denied that this is so. And the prevalent expression of English women, if it is not anxiety, is discontent. Even those who lead the abnormal life of the rich are discontented because, whether they know it or not, all their normal instincts of work have been paralyzed and atrophied. Most of them are little more than unhappy parasites, while the middle-class have an equally aimless career. They have to go to the theatre in order to pretend that they live. They want to be something and are nothing. They live beyond their means and the anxious do not live at all. The best time? Who can weigh anxiety against anxiety and discontent against discontent?

No! It is impossible to answer such a question, and it will remain an impossibility until civilization at last reaches simplicity. By that time, when both sexes know what the true instincts of work and liberty can bring to them, they will not merely be making the best of a very bad job, nor will they imagine that anyone can have a good time while others have a worse one and their own rare moments of happiness are marred by the suffering of others.

HENRY ARTHUR JONES.

WHAT do you mean by "the best time"? Until we are given a definition, how is it possible to say whether man or woman has it, or what men or what women have it? There is no more ignoble aim in life for a man or a woman than to set out to "have a good time," as the phrase is generally understood. The only good or "best time" worth having, the only desirable leisure, either for a man or a woman, is that which automatically comes as a by-product from the faithful performance of work and duty. And this is altogether independent of sex. In the fight for places in the national twopenny bus, I care not how many people get seats, or whether they are men or women. It appears to me a very uncomfortable place for both sexes. But that is the affair of those who scramble to get into it. And looking at the road ahead, are there not some signs of a future smash?

MRS. BAILLIE REYNOLDS.

THE field presented by this question is too wide. If it be asked as a general proposition—a proposition embracing the Purdah woman and the savage—the past and the present, the East and the West—then there can be but one answer, and that is—MAN has the best time, and yet again MAN.

For this one reason only, *that he is free;* and since the dawn of civilization, as we know it, woman has been controlled. If Freedom be the inestimable boon which the modern mind considers it, then we must hold that the lack of freedom is the one thing which poisons all.

"The woman is the glory of the man," said Paul. "He for God only, she for God in him," said Milton. Let women be thankful that no such words are ascribed to Christ. "Then came His disciples, and marvelled that He talked with a woman." "If the case of a man be thus with his wife, then it is not good to marry," argued these same disciples. Paul—great mind, but Oriental, and of his own day—thought it a perfectly natural thing that a girl's future should be entirely decided by her father's will. If that father chose to deny to his daughter the fulfilment of her womanhood, then there was no more to be said. But in the beginning it was not so. And, if we would but follow Christ, in the end it should not be so. If the relations between

man and woman are, or should ever become, what Christ meant them to be, then there can be no question of either sex having the better of the other, because each will be fulfilling its own destiny, doing that for which they were created, the two halves of one whole, mated, as Tennyson has it, "like perfect music unto noble words."

We have far to go before this be attained. As George Meredith said: "Man has but just rounded Seraglio Point. He has not yet doubled Cape Turk." Until he does, it is certain that woman, not being free, must suffer for her bondage, and the more as she acquires the spirit of a free creature.

SIR GILBERT PARKER.

I THINK that men have the best time in the world They are the breadwinners, they have careers to make, they have opportunity to give their gifts a chance, and they have the stimulus of ambition—a tonic to existence. Now-a-day women are demanding all the liberty and independence of men, but if they get it they will have to lay aside many things that give them pleasure now. They have their cares and sorrows, they are handicapped by being women, but they cannot remedy their condition by trying to be men. Yet they should have their chance, and they are getting it. But men have the better time. They have the joy of struggle and of competition, and they have the comforts of home-life which women give them, and, in most cases, the pleasure "of something accomplished, something done."

DAME NELLIE MELBA.

FIRST, let me say that the subject is more worthy of an essay than of a few short sentences. I am no believer in sex rivalry, and sane, healthy-minded men and women are equally content with their lot in life as designed by the Creator. Human beings, male and female, are, in like measure, equipped for the enjoyment of that very indefinable quantity "the best time." When I hear of women envying the privileges of men I am bound to conclude that the cause of dissatisfaction may be sought and found in the women themselves. The joys of womanhood are just as numerous as those allotted to the male. It is only the unphilosophical who would draw a sharp distinction between the primrose path of manhood and the supposedly thorny way of womanhood. Much of the dissatisfaction expressed by women is due to personal bitter experiences—which, after all, are common to both sexes—and to the stupid Teutonic ideas put forth by men like Schopenhauer. Briefly I am inclined to decide in one familiar phrase, "honours even."

WINIFRED GRAHAM.

PERHAPS because the unattainable always dazzles, from my point of view the man has a far better time in life than "sovran woman," however highly her praises be sung. I can prove my point by asking: "Have you ever met a man who wanted to be a woman?" I feel sure your answer will be "No." Then, again, I would ask: "Have you not met dozens of women who would give anything to be men?"

That is why they so frequently imitate him, and compete with him. Man gets the pull all along the line. He proposes, he rules, he has no pangs about his complexion or figure when growing old—he can be blatantly bald-headed without a shiver; he can be a bachelor to the end of his days without creating pity—he is the Master and Lord of Creation, and this reminds me of that old joke: "Woman was created after man, and she has been after him ever since!"

GEORGE ROBEY.

IT is a little bit startling to be asked such a question without warning. It has had the same effect on my mentality as being suddenly called upon for the cube root of seven millions. I really have not thought about it. Unfortunately, my opinion cannot carry much weight, as practically all my knowledge of the fair sex has been gleaned from books. Truth to tell, I am just a little bit afraid of the gentler sex in general, and of one of them in particular. If I thought my wife would not see this article I would tell you whom that one is.

But, seriously, without being able to say who has the better time (and no man—being only a

man—can tell) I hold the opinion that women have a better time now than ever they had. And so they should—bless their little hearts! They are responsible for much of the beauty of this all-too-ugly world. The War has made all the difference. Women have done things which mere man in his conceit thought only himself capable of accomplishing. They have earned most of the rights of men while retaining the advantages which chivalry has always given them. By the work she has done, by the sorrows she has borne, woman has earned a good time for ever.

And remembering the only occasion that I revelled in the embraces of a comely member of the sex, I say "More power to her elbow."

HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL.

WHAT is meant by "best time"?

My mother, when she saw me come in wet through after a hard day's shooting, would say: "I would sooner be a dog than a man." But she belonged to the sheltered-lives epoch. Even to-day, I take it, the essentially male man and the essentially female woman, each healthy, and each normally equipped mentally, would differ profoundly upon what constitutes a "best time." Few men, for example, really understand what the joys of motherhood are. Immeasurable, almost, otherwise women would hardly accept the inevitable pains. The question submitted has perhaps a more vital interest for the many of either sex who are indisputably half masculine and half feminine, hermaphrodite in their tastes. They alone can strike some sort of balance between, let us say, riding to hounds and bathing the baby.

Speaking personally—and I am asked for a personal opinion—I believe that men have the best time, simply because they are the stronger, physically, and can pursue their objectives (whatever these may happen to be) more strenuously *and for a longer time.* How many women on the shady side of fifty can enjoy a hard set at tennis? Of course, there are—and must be—many exceptions to all general rulings. A very great singer, like Dame Melba, or a reigning beauty, any woman preeminently triumphant, stands on peaks exalted high above ordinary mortals and above our present consideration.

However, one would shrink from giving any opinion if the expression "best time" were to be taken in its highest significance. I have seen happiness indelibly inscribed upon the faces of men and women who, most assuredly, have never enjoyed what is termed a "beano." If "best time" means *satisfaction,* Ruskin has defined it admirably as "the art and joy of humble life, of all arts and sciences being the one most needing study. Humble life—that is to say, proposing to itself no future exaltation, but only a sweet continuance; not excluding the idea of foresight, but wholly of foresorrow, and taking no troublous thought for coming days; so, also, not excluding the idea of providence, or provision, but wholly of accumulation—the life of domestic affection and domestic peace, full of sensitiveness to all elements of costless and kind pleasure. . . . ."

Such satisfaction in life, such a "best time," is, possibly, more likely to be gripped and cherished by women rather than men. Ministration underlies it, the joy of giving, poles apart from the joy of taking. Of all joys this alone gives the lie to the sad affirmation, "*tout passe, tout lasse, tout casse.*"

ALFRED LESTER.

WOMEN.—*We* have to shave.

Women.—They are always being *taken out*—we are *taken in.*

Women *should* have the best time, bless 'em. Are there any who wish to be cheered up? (All communications to be marked "*Personal.*")

Photographs of Henry Arthur Jones, Dame Nellie Melba, Horace Annesley Vachell, Mrs. Baillie Reynolds, Winifred Graham, Sir Gilbert Parker, and Morley Roberts, by Elliott & Fry; The Very Rev. J. E. Welldon, by R. Haines; George Robey, by Hana; E. Temple Thurston, by J. Russell & Sons; Alfred Lester, by C. Harris: Father Bernard Vaughan, by Dinkam. Torquay: Max Pemberton, by Swaine.

The Bran-Mash

By LYNN DOYLE

ILLUSTRATED by G·L·STAMPA

A BIT of cleverness is all very fine; but when a man's too clever he had near as well be a fool.

It wasn't foolishness ailed Big Billy of the Hills; 'twas his cleverness that was sometimes too much for him, as you're goin' to hear.

The evenin' of Ballygullion races four of us was comin' home together, myself, Tammas McGorrian, ould John Christy, an' Big Billy; an' as ye may guess, the whole crack was about horseracin' an' bettin'. But we always come back to Major Donaldson an' the Hunter's Plate.

The Major had picked up an' ould skeleton of a mare one Ballygullion fair-day, an' afther feedin' her up, an' givin' her a sayson's huntin', here doesn't he come out with her for the Plate. The whole counthry laughed at him from the time he entered her till she come in five lengths ahead of everything else, at ten to one; an' sorrow a man, woman, or child had a shillin' on her but the two or three of his friends that didn't think him astray in the head for puttin' her in.

We were all a bit gunked about it, an' all the way home one would still say to the other he wished he had risked a crown or so, anyway.

"It's all fine talkin'," sez Tammas McGorrian, "but who'd ha' thought that ould scarecrow could ha' won a race, barrin' 'twas again a donkey. A crown was about the price of the baste, let alone puttin' a crown of a bet on her."

"I don't know about that," sez ould John. "'Twas the huntin' done it," sez he. "There's nothin' as good for a horse as a sayson's huntin'. My brother-in-law—the horse-dealing one, I mean—has made no end of money buyin' likely-lookin' young ones, an' huntin' them a month or two. I've often thought of thryin' it myself wi' that black colt of mine."

"What," sez Tammas McGorrian, "the long-tailed one?"

"Yes," sez ould John, "the long-tailed one. What are ye sniggerin' at?"

"Oh, nothin'," sez Tammas; "if ye had a crane or somethin' like that to lift him over the ditches he couldn't thramp down, he might do rightly.'

An' troth he wasn't far wrong; for if ever there was an ignorant-lookin' cartin' horse 'twas the same black colt. Every leg of him was as thick as the post of a gate, an' he had as much hair on each foot as would ha' stuffed a saddle. His mother had never been anythin' but a plough-horse all her days, an' if his father wasn't a Clydesdale he was a near friend to one, I'm thinkin'.

"He's not as heavy as all that," sez ould John; "an' if he can't lepp, couldn't he learn? Wouldn't he hunt rightly, Billy?" sez he.

"Oh, whatever ye say yourself," sez Billy. "But in my opinion the first hunt he's at he'll be inside the dogs."

"I believe ye, Billy," sez Tammas, chucklin'. "If it was that wee hack of mine now that runs in the milk-cart. He'd ha' made a rattlin' hunter."

"He might," sez Billy, "about the time of the Flood. Sure he's as ould as Methusalem's goat. Runs in the milk-cart," sez he. "He hasn't broke intil a trot since that time about five years ago that ye give him the feed of corn."

"Niver mind when I give him a feed of corn," sez Tammas, gettin' a bit hot. "He may be a thrifle ould, but there's blood in him. He could travel yet."

"Tut," sez Billy, seein' he had Tammas a bit riled. "The baste's been dead this two or three years, an' doesn't know it."

"Oh, of course you're a funny man, Billy," sez Tammas, gettin' angrier when he heard us laughin', "we all know that. But if he couldn't bate that porpoise of John's he deserves to be dead."

"Ye should have a match," sez Billy, winkin' at me. "'Twould be a day's outin's for the people, pushin' the two of them along."

"Oh, laugh away," sez Tammas. "But I'm not afeared. I tell ye what I'll do. I'll match him again John's horse over a mile of counthry for ten pound, if John puts up the same."

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"Now we're talkin'," sez Billy. "Come, John, make a match of it. Misther McGorrian's 'Robin Redbreast' again Misther Christy's —what do ye call him, John?"

"Oh, sure he has no name," sez Tammas. "The crather's a sort of a foundlin'. Betther call him 'The Undhertaker,'" sez he, "for devil at all he's fit for but pullin' a hearse."

That settled John.

"Is he not?" sez he, as mad as ye like. "Do ye see that?" sez he, pullin' two five-pound notes out of his pocket. "Put your ten pound again that, an' I'll face ye over any mile in the county. Let Pat here hold the stakes."

"Done!" sez Tammas. "I haven't it on me at the minit, but I'll post it wi' Pat in the mornin'."

"Don't post it wi' me, boys," sez I. "I might want to make a bet on the match, an' I couldn't do that if I held the stakes. Betther wait till the mornin' an' get somebody else."

"Wait a minit, boys," sez Billy, pullin' me aside. "Nail them now, ye fool," sez he, "or ye'll spoil the whole fun. The whisky'll be dead in them by mornin' and there'll be no race."

"Not at all," sez I. "Sure that racecourse whisky stays in your system for a fortnight. 'Twould be just as well if they did back out, anyway. It's a foolish business altogether."

"What odds if it is?" sez Billy. "Sure it's not us is the fools. Leave it to me an' don't be spoilin' sport."

"Pat an' me has been considherin'," sez he, to the two of them, "an' we were thinkin' Major Donaldson would be a good man to hold the stakes. Besides, he's a knowledgable man about racin', an' would look afther the arrangements. He would maybe let ye run it over the home farm, too. What do ye think, boys?"

"I don't care who holds the stakes," sez ould John. "One man's as good as another to me. There's my ten pound ready, an' I'm ready, too, an' the horse'll be ready when the time comes."

"Well, then," sez Billy, "give the money to Pat here, an' he'll take it up to the Major to-night. Tammas can leave his up in the mornin'. Will ye be satisfied if the Major makes the arrangements?"

"I'm content," sez Tammas, "any time an' place for me. But maybe John here would like a while to take some of the beef off the colt an' teach him a bit o' leppin'. He'll make a sore hand of the Major's fences if he doesn't."

"Never you mind about the Major's fences," sez ould John, very hot. "The horse is a betther horse nor yours, an' mebbe his masther is a betther man——"

"There now, boys," sez Billy, seein' the race was like to turn out a fight, "don't be quarrellin' over what's only sport. Come on, Tammas, this is our road. Good night, boys."

There was no makin' the Major believe at the first it was anythin' but a joke; for he knowed both "Robin Redbreast" an' the colt But when he was satisfied that both sides meant business, he took fire at once, an' in a minit had down the map of the home farm, plannin' out a mile where there was as easy ditches as he could get. Before I left that night he had it all cut an' dry, the course planned, the judge picked, an' the date fixed for that day four weeks.

Divil the man in the whole neighbourhood but had his bit of money on the match. It wasn't on account of people believin' one horse or the other was the best that there was so much bettin'. It was just that nobody thought both horses would finish, an' there was a differs of opinion about which would be the one to do it. Them that was well-up in horses give out that the "Redbreast" was bound to stick in the ploughed field, by reason of his stiff joints; an' although everybody allowed that the "Undhertaker" (for the name stuck to him) would break his wind for sure if he had to gallop the whole way, there was always the hope that he'd have time to walk the rest of the course while the "Redbreast" was gettin' out of the ploughed ground. So the "Undhertaker" was made favourite, an' in a day or two stood at three to one on.

But afther about ten days the "Undhertaker" begin to go back in the bettin', an' before long he was just at even money, an' sometimes two to one again him. He looked worth backin' at that, but just as I had made up my mind I would risk a pound on him, I heard that Big Billy was thrainin' the "Redbreast," an' had invented a bran-mash that was makin' a new horse of him, so I put my money back in the stockin'.

Not that I believed in the mash; but I knowed that when Billy was in the business there was some divilment on foot, an' I thought I'd see a bit into things before I parted with my money.

So off I goes the next afternoon to Tammas McGorrian's, an' the first man I met in the yard was Billy himself.

"What's this about a mash ye've made for the 'Redbreast,' Billy?" sez I.

"I'm sorry, Misther Murphy," sez Billy, very stiff, "but I can't give you any information. The horse is in my hands, an' of course my lips is closed. An' I'm afraid I'll have to ask you to retire from the neighbourhood of the stable. No outsiders is admitted."

"Come now, Billy," sez I, "don't be goin' back on an ould friend. If ye have a bit of information, you'll not put it past me. Ye owe me a day in harvest, ye know that rightly."

An' so he did, an' two pound, too, he borrowed off me to pay the lawyer for gettin' him off at the quarther sessions, the month before, on a charge of makin' poteen.

"Pat," sez he, dhroppin' his grand airs all of a sudden, "can ye hold your tongue?"

"I've bad teeth," sez I, "but I'll try."

"Well, come on an' see the 'Redbreast' trainin', an' wait for me aftherwards an' I'll walk home with ye. It'll be worth your while."

Away we goes up to the stable, an' there we finds Tammas McGorrian an' Davie McGra, the horse-breaker.

"It's only Pat Murphy, Tammas," sez Billy. "Are ye ready, boys?"

"Right," sez Tammas.

So Tammas looses the "Redbreast," an' leads him out of the stall.

The minit I seen him I was sorry I hadn't put my money on the colt. Ye niver seen such a dyin'-lookin' object in your life. He hadn't been much to look at, the last ten years or so, but he was worse gone to the bad than ever. His coat was as dhry as a whistle, an' his eyes all boiled-lookin' an' bloodshot; an, there wasn't as much hair on his tail as would ha' made a bow for a fiddle.

"He seems a bit out of condition, gintlemen," sez I.

"He's a bit over-trained," sez Billy; "but wait till ye see him when I give him the mash. Pull him out of the stable, Davie, while I'm mixin' it."

But 'twas easier said than done. They got him the length of the door of the stable, an' sorrow a foot farther would he go. First Tammas give him a shove himself, an' then I got behind him too, but there he stuck, an' more he wouldn't do.

"Wait till I get the reins," sez the horse-breaker, goin' out through the door. "Do you shove an' I'll pull. Now then, all together."

Davie braces himself up for a pull, an' Tammas an' I gives a heave, an' I believe we'd ha' shifted him if the bridle hadn't pulled over the baste's head. As it was, Davie went out intil the middle of the yard on his back, an' the horse give ground a step or two.

"DAVIE BRACES HIMSELF UP FOR A PULL, AN' TAMMAS AN' I GIVES A HEAVE, AN' I BELIEVE WE'D HA' SHIFTED HIM IF THE BRIDLE HADN'T PULLED OVER THE BASTE'S HEAD."

"Keep back, Pat!" shouts Tammas. "He's goin' to lie down!"

"Hold on, boys," sez Billy. "I'll give him the mash before he goes out."

"Let me on his back," sez Davie, comin' in all mud an' dirt, an' as mad as a hatter. "Put the bridle on him, an' I'll have him out if I should kill him!" An' Davie intil the saddle an' up wi' his whip.

"Easy, Davie, easy!" sez Tammas; "the horse is mine. Give him the mash, Billy."

So Billy comes forward with a bucket in his hand.

"I must ask ye to keep back, boys," sez he. "The ingredients of the mash is known only to myself, an' I don't want to run the chance of them bein' discovered before I patent it. Sit tight now, Davie, or he'll pull you over his head."

Man, ye should ha' seen the ould horse goin' at that mash, pushin' his head again the bucket, an' shakin' his tail like a suckin' calf at a can of milk! Before you'd wink he had the bucket dry.

"Wait a minit now, boys," sez Billy, "till it begins to work."

It didn't take long. Ye could ha' seen the baste comin' round. First he begin to lift his head, then he gives a prance or two; an' then wi' a couple of flings an' a squeal he out through the door like a flash. The lintel of the door took Davie about the breast-bone, an' he turned clane round in the air, an' lit on his face on the heap of rubbish that was swept up at the end of the last stall.

There's no manner of doubt but that was what saved his life; but if it did it finished out his suit of clothes, for the front was more than a match for the back when he got up.

"The divil fly away wi' you an' your mashes,

Billy Lenahan!" sez he, fair sputtherin' wi' rage. "Ye've made a nice hand of me, you an' that cursed baste! Look at my clothes," sez he—"a good ridin'-suit ruined entirely!"

"It's well you're purty long, Davie," sez Billy. "If ye'd been six inches shorter ye'd ha' been spittin' teeth, if your neck hadn't been broke. Here's a wee dhrop of poteen'll help ye. Ye'll be as right as a trivet once ye get in the saddle."

"I'll never put me leg over the brute again," sez Davie. "Never if ye were to give me twenty pound!"

But when the poteen had warmed him a bit, he come round, an' afther we had caught the "Redbreast," we got him mounted an' out to the field behind the stable.

An' troth 'twas wondherful to see the horse ye wouldn't ha' given tuppence for ten minits before, tearin' round the field an' over a couple of lepps Tammas had put up. I begin to think more of Billy's mash than I had at first. If the "Redbreast" could only keep his form up, the colt wasn't goin' to be in it.

Afther a couple of turns round the field Billy stopped the horse an' brought him in. While I was standin' waitin' for him, Tammas comes up to me.

"Don't be sayin' anythin' about the mash, Pat," sez he. "We want to keep it dark."

"Does nobody else know about it, then?" sez I.

"Divil a soul but what ye seen the day—Davie, Billy, an' myself."

"H'm!" thinks I. "I could tell ye a different story. But sure it's none of my business."

"Ye can depend on me, Tammas," sez I. "Good evenin' to ye. I'm goin' down the road wi' Billy."

"Good evenin'," sez Tammas. "Mind ye don't squeal!"

"That's right," sez Billy, as we went down the road. "We want to get the bets on before it leaks out. It's three to one again the 'Redbreast' now. You go an' put on what money ye can spare; for the 'Redbreast' at three to one again him is as good a thing as you're likely to come across in your day."

"Three to one in your hat, Billy," sez I. "Sure it's all out about the mash. Sorrow a three to one ye'll get again the 'Redbreast.' It'll bother ye to get evens. I heard they were layin' two to one on him in Robinson's, the barber's, yesterday."

Ye never seen a man worse sold than Billy.

"It's that fool Davie has blabbed," says he, with an oath. "Burst him, his tongue is as long as himself! He has ruined one of the best things I ever had on."

"Maybe it was Tammas," sez I.

"Maybe it was the divil!" sez Billy, very mad. "Hould on a bit till I think."

An' near all the way home Billy walked with his head down, never sayin' a word.

All at once he straightens himself up an' chuckles till himself; an' I knowed he'd hit on somethin'.

"Pat," sez he, "give me what money you're goin' to put on, an' I'll put it on for ye with mine. We may as well lump it."

"I've been thinkin', too, Billy," sez I, "an' I've made up my mind not to bet at all. The whole thing is foolish. Neither of them'll finish."

All the same, it wasn't that made me back out. Between you an' me, I misdoubted Billy, for I knowed by the look on his face he was up to some divilment or other. An' for another thing, he wouldn't let out to me, noways, what he was puttin' in the mash. All I could get from him was that it was a Chinese drug had been give him by his uncle, the sea-captain. An' seein' the uncle was as big a rascal as himself, I was more on my guard than ever.

"I'll tell ye what, Billy," sez I. "You owe me a couple of pound. Just put that on for me." ("For," thinks I to meself, "the Lord only knows whether I'd ever see it, anyway.")

I could see Billy was a bit gunked. But he couldn't well say anythin', so we parted on that understandin'.

At last the big day came; an' I was as glad as anybody; for all the time I'd been batin' me brains to think what Billy had put in the mash.

But whatever it was, the people believed in it, anyway; for they were layin' two to one on the "Redbreast" from ever the word of it got well spread.

The mornin' of the race I went up to the course early, for I'd settled to give Tammas a hand, while Billy would be away mixin' the mash.

Ye never seen such a crowd. Ballygullion races was nothin' till it. There hadn't been as many cars an' thraps in the Major's yard since his father's funeral.

The course was black wi' people; an' every now an' then somebody would lift a bush out of a fence or kick a stone or two off the top of a ditch for fear neither of the horses would finish.

The "Undhertaker" was stabled at the top of the Major's yard, an' the "Redbreast" in a loose-box at the bottom av it—both of them with a crowd round them laughin' an' crackin' jokes till ye couldn't have heard your ears.

However, the Major insisted on them all clearin' away to the course; an' at last we got a kind of peace; though there was still some of them wouldn't budge, but would still be hangin' round Billy to try if they could spot him makin' the mash.

About a quarther of an hour before the time fixed, Billy sends a message for me to come to him. I found him in the potato-house, all by himself, with a bucket beside him.

"Keep an eye on this, Pat," sez he, settin' it on a shelf above his head. "The Major has sent for me. Don't let anybody near it." An' away he goes like a shot.

When he was well out of sight I reached for the bucket, for I was dyin' to find out what he had in it; but just as I had my hand on it one of the under-gardeners comes up, hot-foot.

"The Major wants you, too, Misther Murphy," sez he. "He's waitin' for ye wi' Billy Lenahan. Billy said ye might come if ye shut the door, whatever he meant by that."

"Are you sure the Major wants me?" sez I, for I misdoubted some roguery.

"I'm just straight from him," sez he. "He said ye weren't to be long, for he wanted to get on the course."

I looked hard at the fellow; but he was a stupid-lookin' crather, an' I couldn't think he had it in him to be up to any tricks.

"All right," sez I; an' I shuts the door an' away up to the house.

I wasn't half-way there when I meets Billy comin' back at a run, an' when he seen me he lets a roar at me for every kind of a fool ye ever heard of.

"Didn't I tell ye," sez he, pullin' me with him, "not to leave the bucket? We're tricked!" sez he. "The Major wasn't there at all. It was all to get at the mash."

"Tricked we are, Billy," sez I, "that ever I should be such a fool! The mash is gone by this time."

An' when we got to the potato-house, right enough bucket an' mash was away.

I've heard some purty tall talk in my day, but the language of Billy fair dazed my eyes.

"They've give it to the "Undhertaker,'" sez he, when he drew his breath. "They've give it to the 'Undhertaker,' an' me has ten pound on him—ten pound at two to one!"

"On the 'Undhertaker,' Billy?" sez I. "On the 'Undhertaker'? You're dotin'. Sure ye were backin' the 'Redbreast'—your own horse."

"Was I?" sez Billy. "What do ye take me for? I wouldn't lay odds on the best horse that ever stepped. Listen, ye ould dunderheaded gomeril. When they were bettin' three to one again the 'Redbreast' I was goin' to back him right enough; an' I believe what I was givin' him would ha' carried him through. But when it leaked out that I was givin' him somethin', an' the bettin' went the other way, it wasn't worth while backin' him at two to one on. So I laid my money on the 'Undhertaker,' an' put a double dose of my uncle's mixture in the 'Redbreast's' mash this mornin'. It's queer stuff, ye must know. A little does ye good, but too much fair bewilders ye. Divil a further he would ha' got than the first ditch with all that in him, an' the 'Undhertaker' would ha' won as he liked. Now," sez he, "the 'Undhertaker' has got it. By this time he's clean mesmerized, an' nothin' can keep the 'Redbreast' out of the race if he can even walk. Where are ye goin'?" sez Billy, as I moved off.

"I'm goin' somewhere to laugh, Billy," sez I.

"Ye needn't laugh so soon, Pat," sez Billy, very nasty. "There's two pound of yours on the 'Undhertaker,' too."

"Let it go, Billy," sez I. "It's worth the money to me to—— What the divil's that?" sez I, as there came a crash from up the yard.

"DAVIE TURNED CLANE ROUND IN THE AIR AN' LIT ON HIS FACE ON THE HEAP OF RUBBISH THAT WAS SWEPT UP AT THE END OF THE LAST STALL."

"That's the 'Undhertaker,'" sez Billy, "comin' out—likely through the wall!"

It was more than we could stand. Billy looks at me, an' me at him, an' then we sits down an' laughs till we were sore.

In the middle of it up comes Tammas McGorrian.

"Hurry up wi' the mash, Billy," sez he. "An' you'll need to make it strong. They say the 'Undhertaker' is terrible fresh. I'm goin' to give the 'Redbreast' a rub-down till ye come." An' off goes Tammas.

"Wait a minit," sez Billy, leppin' to his feet when Tammas had gone. "It's not all up yet. Away up the yard wi' ye, Pat, an' keep things goin' till I mix another mash. I have as much as'll make a double dose left yet. I'll give it to the 'Redbreast,'

First he'd take a run forward, an' up on his hind-end, pawin' in the air; then he'd take a run sideways, an' near fall; an' then he'd lash out his two heels with a squeal an' make at John or wee Cox open-mouthed, whichever was nearest him.

Ould John kept dancin' round him, first reachin' for the bridle, then threatenin' him wi' the spade, an' all the time cursin' an' prayin' in the same breath. Just as I come up the horse made a buck-lepp at him that would ha' been the end of him sure if he hadn't slipped in behind the cart I was standin' on.

"OULD JOHN KEPT DANCIN' ROUND HIM, FIRST REACHIN' FOR THE BRIDLE, THEN THREATENIN' HIM WI' THE SPADE, AN' ALL THE TIME CURSIN' AN' PRAYIN' IN THE SAME BREATH."

an' ye'll see such a race as never was before, in Ballygullion or anywhere else. Away ye go now. Ye needn't be pryin'. This mixture is my own patent, an' I wouldn't give it away, even to a friend."

When I got to the top of the yard there was about ten or fifteen people there, all pushin' an' scramblin' to get on the top av whatever they could reach. One was on a barrel, another on the horse-block; six or seven was thryin' to get intil the Major's phaeton all at the one time; an' the rest was makin' for the roof of the coach-house with a ladder.

Out in the middle of the yard was ould John Christy himself, with a spade, an' wee Johnny Cox, the blacksmith's son, that was to ride for him, with a pitchfork. The "Undhertaker" had possession of the rest of it.

"What's the matther wi' the brute at all at all, John?" sez I. "Ye must ha' been givin' him somethin'."

I couldn't resist havin' a dig at him, for he'd been at the bottom of stealin' the mash, I was sure.

But ye should ha' seen the look he took at me! I believe he'd ha' hit me wi' the spade, only the horse stood on the reins that minit an' pulled himself up, an' John was that keen to get hold of him he hadn't time for me.

Wee Cox ran in on the "Undhertaker" the same minit, as plucky as a lion, an' intil the saddle safe and sound. However he did it, he got the baste's head turned next the course, an' out of the yard he goes like a thunderbolt, takin' two bars of the Major's fancy gate with him.

Then everybody gets down from his perch,

one askin' the other what was wrong wi' the horse; but in the middle of the fuss there comes a cry that the "Redbreast" was out, an' we all down the yard to see him.

The first look I got at him I seen the mash was workin' extra strong.

When he got clear of the loose-box he looked round him in a bewildered kind of a way; then he staggered a step or two an' fell slap through one of the Major's pheasant-boxes that was sittin' in the yard.

The crowd raised a cheer an' ran to pick him up; but poor Tammas could only stand there lookin' at him open-mouthed, with Davie beside him near as stupid. As for Billy, he took one look, an' then slipped back intil the loose-box.

By this time the people begin to see there must be some divilment afoot, an' ye might ha' heard the laughin' an' cheerin' a mile away. Anyway, it brought others up from the fields; an' the end of it was they armed the poor ould "Redbreast" down to the course in the middle of that big a crowd that he couldn't get fallin' if he wanted to.

When they got him down to the startin'-point, there was the "Undhertaker" lyin' hobbled wi' a rope, an' about fifty men an' boys holdin' him down.

The Major was bothered enough to know what was up wi' the "Undhertaker"; but when he seen the state of the "Redbreast" he was clean bewildered altogether. Nothin' would do him but he'd find out what was up, but that was beyond him.

Poor Tammas McGorrian nor Davie McGra didn't know, of course, an' John Christy an' his party, if they did guess anything, couldn't very well speak without givin' themselves away.

As for Billy, him an' me was lyin' undher a hedge about a hundhred yards off; for Billy misdoubted but there might soon be too many askin' for him for it to be good for his health.

At first the Major was for stoppin' the race altogether. However, the crowd wouldn't stand that. The whole thing had been more or less of a joke from the first; an' they weren't to be done out of their fun now that the joke was betther than ever. Besides, as far as the chances of the horses winnin' was concerned, it was still six of one an' half-a-dozen of the other.

The end of it was, some of th m he'd the "Undhertaker" down till the flag fell. an' others pushed the "Redbreast" off, an' away they went, wi' such a yellin' crowd afther them as ye never heard.

If the "Undhertaker" could ha' run straight it was a soft thing for him, for he was at the first fence an' through it like a shot before the "Redbreast" had got up the second time. But once he was through the fence the divil at all he would do but run rings round the next field, squealin' an' kickin' up his heels; an' in the meantime the "Redbreast" had got pushed through the hole he had made an' was well on to the next ditch at what ye might call a steady stagger.

"The 'Redbreast' wins, Billy," sez I. "Ye didn't put enough in his mash afther all."

"I put in all I had." sez Billy. "He's got seasoned wi' the last two or three weeks. He could sup the stuff now like sweet milk. All the same he's too bamboozled yet to trot, let alone gallop, an' if they only get the colt headed for the winnin'-post he'll do it still. The people has the fences flattened down all the way."

With that the "Undhertaker" gives a spang intil the air, an' off along the course like a streak. Before a minit he was over the hill an' out of sight.

"Didn't I tell ye?" sez Billy. "Come on, Pat!" An' away we goes for the winnin'-post, thinkin' 'twould be all over before we got there.

But as we topped the ' we seen a crowd round the last fence.

"He's down, by heavens!" sez Billy. An' so he was; right in the middle of the fence, with every man that had money on him tryin' to get him on his feet. 'Twas no use, though. Every time they got him up, down he went in a heap again, with his eyes closed.

"It's no good, boys," sez wee Cox. "He's done."

"What's the matter with him, anyway?" sez one. "Where's the vet?" sez another.

"Hould on," sez

"WHEN HE GOT CLEAR OF THE LOOSE-BOX HE LOOKED ROUND HIM IN A BEWILDERED KIND OF A WAY."

three or four at once, "here's Misther MacDermott, the schoolmaster; he'll, maybe, know."

Up comes the masther, as they generally called him. He had closed the school for the race, an' by reason of it's bein' early in the day, was most exthraordinary sober.

"What's wrong, boys?" sez he. "What is it has happened?"

"The 'Undhertaker' has broke down," sez everybody at the same time. "Can ye do anythin' for him? Quick! masther, if ye can, for the 'Redbreast' 'll be here any minit."

"Stand back an' let me look at him," sez the masther.

He takes a hard look at the horse, then pulls one of his eyes open an' bends down close to him.

"What is it at all, masther?" sez John.

"Nothin' much," sez the masther. "Many a dacent man's been overtaken the same way, so it's small blame to a horse."

"HE TAKES A HARD LOOK AT THE HORSE, THEN PULLS ONE OF HIS EYES OPEN AN' BENDS DOWN CLOSE TO HIM. 'WHAT IS IT AT ALL, MASTHER?' SEZ JOHN."

"Ah, masther dear," sez John, "don't be foolin', but tell us at once. What is it now, if ye know?"

"Speakin'," sez the masther, cockin' his eye very wise, "speakin' out of a lifetime of experience, I would say that the baste was dhrunk."

"What!" shouts wee Cox, "was it *dhrunk* ye said?"

"Dhrunk," sez the masther, "full, blind, tight, inebriated—whatever name ye like to give it, an' a very nice and complete load of dhrink he seems to have got—poteen, too, by the smell. He's sleepin' it off now," sez he, "an' if a horse takes it anyway like a human bein', he'll wake up in about an hour's time with a headache would split a stable wall."

"I'll be blest if the masther isn't right!" sez Pether Cassidy, sniffin' at the baste. "I have it, too, John," sez he. "By the Hokey, it was the mash that we stole—Billy's bran-mash. Him an' his Chinese drugs! We might ha'e knowed there was trickery about anythin' he had his finger in. Would a mash with poteen in it make the horse dhrunk, masther?" sez Peter.

"I've never tried it on as large a scale myself, up to the present," sez the masther, "but I would say there was great possibilities in a bran an' poteen mash—mixed sthrong."

"Never mind what done it now," sez John Christy, all excited. "Can we not get him on his feet among us? Aw, boys a boys, here's the 'Redbreast' comin' over the hill! Listen to the cheerin'. By heavens, he's broke intil a trot! Pull this brute out of the fence intil the fields—we'll have to get him up, boys, one way or another."

"No, no, let him lie in the fence," sez wee Cox, "an' the 'Redbreast' 'll never get over him."

"No, fetch him out, an' give him a chance," shouts two or three of his backers.

"That's right, fetch him out," sez John, dancin' round half-mad with vexation. "Oh, boys dear, are we goin' to be beat an' him not a hundred yards from the post? The 'Redbreast' 'll be here in a minit. Take him by the legs," sez he, "an' trail him that far."

"It's no good," sez wee Cox; "he'd be disqualified. Could ye not put us up to somethin', masther, for the love of goodness?"

"I've known decent men of my acquaintance," sez the masther, "greatly invigorated by puttin' their heads undher a pump. Ye might try a hatful of cold water on him."

"It's a good idea," shouts John. "Run, some of ye, down to the drain. Run, now; we haven't a minit. Here's the 'Redbreast.'"

It didn't look as if the water was goin' to do much good. The first splash of it the "Undhertaker" got he only turned over on his other side, an' kicked off Pether Cassidy's hat; an' the next minit the "Redbreast" was in among us, with a crowd of his backers walkin' behind him as if they were at a funeral, not one

of them sayin' a word for fear their breath would blow him down. At the rate he was goin' he had about a half an hour's journey before him.

"Come on, Pat," sez Billy, pullin' me up from the ditch where we were lyin'. "I can stand this no longer. There's twenty pounds waitin' for me if I can only get that ould cart-horse started. Masther dear," sez he, pullin' the wee man out of the crowd, "can ye not put us on to some tip to start the 'Undhertaker'? If ye do, I'll keep ye in poteen for a twelvemonth."

"Get him on his feet, Billy," sez the masther, "an' put the two police there one on every side of him. They're two very experienced men," sez he. "The pair of them fetched me home from Michael Cassidy's pub last quarter-day when I was overcome with a slight dizziness in my legs; an' if they can do that, a horse'll be only child's play to them."

"Ah, now, masther," sez I, "quit your jokin'. I've two pound on the brute myself. If ye can do anything at all, do it, or we're too late."

For the "Redbreast" was near half-way by now. Wee Bandy Thetford, the whipper-in, that had been laid off by the Major to judge the race, an' had come back to see the fun, strolled off to the winnin'-post again.

"The money's lost!" sez Billy, with a groan. "Oh, masther, can ye do nothin'?"

"There's only one chance, Billy," sez the masther, takin' off his tall hat. "Fetch back the full of that of water, an' we'll try an internal application. It's not a form of moisture I'm greatly addicted to myself," sez the masther to me, as Billy run off, "but there's a piece of poetry in the Fifth Reading-Book speaks highly of it. Stand back, boys," sez he, pushin' through the crowd. "Do you lift his head, Billy, an' I'll pour."

It was like a miracle. The first gulp the "Undhertaker" took he gave a spang with his heels that cleared a twenty-foot ring round him, an' with the next he was on his feet pawin' like a lion.

"Up with you, Cox, up with you!" screeches his backers, an' up goes wee Cox like a lamplighter. He give the bridle a shake, an' dug the ould horse with the spurs. For a minit the "Undhertaker" stood stock-still blinkin' round him, an' the crowd give a groan, thinkin' he'd fall again. By this time the "Redbreast" was thirty yards from the post. But with that the "Undhertaker" takes a prance an' a squeal, an' away like an arrow, wee Cox, that had lit back on his hind-quarters, holdin' on like grim death by the reins.

It was a great finish. The worst of it is that to the last day we'll never know who won. Wee Bandy, the judge, not hearin' the "Undhertaker" comin', with all the row was goin' on, steps aside into the middle of the course to let the "Redbreast" past; an' the "Undhertaker" hit him about the two metal buttons in the small of his back. He went up three feet in the air before he fell, an' then lay groanin' on his face, an' when they took him to the Cottage Hospital he had concussion of the brain an' two ribs broke. When he came to, the divil a decision would he give, though some of the backers hung round the hospital all afternoon; but sat up in bed an' cursed Billy Lenahan till his temperature riz three degrees.

An' troth, if some of the crowd could have got their hands on Billy, the same curses would have come to roost mighty quick! But before they had their wits gathered to look for him he was two miles away in the hills, blastin' the "Undhertaker" somethin' dreadful over twenty pounds he had as good as in his hand, an' lost after all.

From that day to this, if ye want a drop of Billy's mountain dew instead of the real duty-paid, ye just step in to somebody in the know an' ask him to mix ye a stiff bran-mash.

The only drawback, the wee masther says, is that they don't mix it for ye in a bucket.

"THE 'REDBREAST' WITH A CROWD OF HIS BACKERS WALKIN' BEHIND HIM, NOT ONE OF THEM SAYIN' A WORD FOR FEAR THEIR BREATH WOULD BLOW HIM DOWN."

The PSYCHOLOGY of AUDIENCES

by David Devant

ILLUSTRATED BY A. FERRIER

THE most interesting part of a conjurer's work is popularly supposed to be the concoction of "secrets." The invention of new illusions and tricks is certainly interesting work, but, after a life-long experience of conjuring, I am inclined to think that the fascination of finding material for a performance is certainly equalled by that of studying the effect which the performance produces on the minds of an audience.

Every conjurer has to play on the minds of his audience, and the more intelligent the audience the easier is the conjurer's task. It follows, therefore, that the conjurer's most difficult audience is one composed of young children. A conjurer is generally supposed to be beset with difficulties when he is performing to children, because "the children are so sharp," but the real truth is that the conjurer is put on his mettle because the children are not sharp enough. In proof of the truth of that statement, I may say that the conjurer has precisely the same difficulties when he is performing to a village audience. In both cases the minds of the audience are immature; the majority of the spectators do not follow the conjurer's conversation; the conjurer then feels that his grip on the minds of the audience is not secure, and his troubles begin.

But, you may argue, what about the conjuring of the music-hall illusionist who presents his miracles without saying a word and yet contrives to "play upon the minds of his audience"? Well, with all respect to those illusionists who give what is known as a "silent show," I do not regard their work as the highest form of conjuring. I am convinced that the effect which the silent performer produces on the minds of his audience is not to be compared with that produced by a conjurer who performs in the old orthodox manner, doing his tricks slowly, so that no point shall be missed, and explaining every detail as he goes along.

The "silent conjurer," or illusionist, is really an exhibitor of puzzles—and nothing more. He presents one puzzle after the other, very quickly—because he dare not be deliberate—and at the end of his performance the minds of the audience are merely confused. The people have seen some very good puzzles on a large scale, but not one person in every hundred in the audience could describe any one of the illusionist's tricks. The audience are in the position of a man who walks through a picture gallery quickly; he certainly sees some pictures, but since he does not give any one of them time to make a deep impression on his mind he really sees nothing.

"A CONJURER IS GENERALLY SUPPOSED TO BE BESET WITH DIFFICULTIES WHEN HE IS PERFORMING TO CHILDREN."

Now think for a moment of the conjurer who speaks while he is performing. By speaking he is able to state each magical problem quite clearly, to set out the plot of his trick in such a way that everyone can understand it. Then the audience are shown that, to the

"CHING LUNG SOO HAD STUDIED THE ART OF SPEAKING BY SIGNS."

conjurer, the impossible is apparently possible, but—let us hope!—they do not see how the conjurer solves his magical problems. Having had every opportunity of following all the details of each trick the audience are duly impressed by the effect. Everyone knows exactly what the conjurer has apparently done, and the audience will go away and tell each other all about it; I have heard them hundreds of times.

True, the audience's description of the performance will not be accurate, for very few persons can describe a trick properly after they have seen it only once; there is always a tendency towards exaggeration. But the main effect of each trick will be impressed on the minds of the audience.

Do you not agree with me that the work of the conjurer who gives his audience time to see each trick clearly is on a higher plane than that of the silent performer who presents illusion after illusion so rapidly that no one can say definitely afterwards what the performer is supposed to have done?

In justice to the silent performers, however, I will admit that there are exceptions to my rule. A good expression, or an impressive gesture, may take the place of the spoken word. My friend, the late Chung Ling Soo, for example, performed very deliberately, in the style of the Oriental magician, but he had studied the art of speaking by signs, and his facial expression was wonderful. Even with these advantages he was more successful, to my mind, when he was performing privately to his friends and permitting himself to speak than he was when he was performing to the public, great as his public success was.

Sometimes a silent performer will put two or three "speaking tricks" in the middle of his entertainment; these tricks are always his best tricks because, by speaking, he produces a clear, lasting effect on the minds of his audience.

The conjurer's conversation is one of his most important weapons, for, unknown to the audience, it really serves two purposes. It enables the conjurer to put the details of each trick clearly before the audience, and it also enables him to divert the attention of the audience at the critical moment of each trick. There is always at least one such moment in every trick, and when that moment has passed the conjurer knows that his trick is practically over, but the audience should not be aware that anything has happened. The effort of diverting the attention of the audience must be entirely concealed. The conjurer's conversation and actions must be apparently spontaneous, but, in reality, every word and every movement must be carefully considered and rehearsed. The old saying, "the quickness of the hand deceives the eye," is absurd, for in the first place you cannot move your hand so quickly that the eye cannot follow the movement, and, in the second place, if you move your hand quickly in a trick you are practically telling the audience that you are trying to prevent them from seeing what you are doing, and that is precisely the effect which the conjurer should not produce on the minds of his audience. It is quite possible, of course, that the conjurer may have to move his hand or, at any rate, his fingers very quickly, but in that case the movement must be hidden.

Another important detail is the arrangement of the tricks. The minds of the audience will be in a condition to appreciate a certain trick in the middle of the performance; open the

"I THINK THE IDEAL AUDIENCE IS ONE COMPOSED OF ADULTS WHO HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN THAT THEY WERE ONCE CHILDREN."

performance with the same trick, and it will go for nothing; the audience will not see the point of it. Hence the necessity of getting the audience into the right mood to appreciate one's best efforts; it is the first thing the conjurer has to do when he walks on the stage. An experienced performer knows at once if his audience are in the right mood for him, and if they are not he will spend the first ten minutes of his performance in getting them into the right mood, for until he has done this, until he has created the right atmosphere for his performance, the conjurer will not succeed in getting the undivided attention of his audience, and without that he cannot succeed.

A small "turn" at a music-hall has no time for this preliminary work of creating the right atmosphere; the small "turn" is probably on the stage for only ten minutes, and therefore has to take his chance as to whether the audience like or dislike his performance. A popular conjurer, knowing that he has fifty minutes allowed for his performance, can well afford to spend the first ten minutes in winning the people to him. Afterwards, when the conjurer knows that he has "got" the audience—and he knows this instinctively—he can do what he pleases with them. He can sway the audience in the way he desires, making them believe that things which are not happening are happening, and *vice-versâ*.

Although no two audiences are quite alike there are points of similarity between all of them. I think the ideal audience is one composed of adults who have not forgotten that they were once children, for are we not all big children, more especially when we are going to have an evening's entertainment?

"A BLASÉ AUDIENCE, WHO THINK IT RATHER BAD FORM TO BE INTERESTED IN ANYTHING."

"I HAVE SEEN QUITE NICE PEOPLE SCRAMBLING AMONG THEMSELVES TO GET SOME CAKES WORTH ABOUT TWOPENCE EACH!"

It is not always the fault of the conjurer when he fails to "get" his audience; the audience may not be in a condition to appreciate what the conjurer has to show them. The worst audience in the world for a conjurer is one whose wits have been muddled by alcohol; it is quite hopeless to try to entertain such people with conjuring tricks. A *blasé* audience, composed of people who think it rather bad form to be interested in anything, is also somewhat difficult, but you seldom get an audience of that kind.

By the way, the importance of getting the right atmosphere for a performance is well appreciated by the spiritualists, who invariably begin their *séances* with lowered lights and hymn-singing. It is not until the minds of the circle have been led to expect that something mysterious is to happen that something more or less mysterious does happen.

It is interesting to notice the way in which an audience composed of people not of the highest mental calibre are affected—probably without being conscious of it—by the various suggestions made to them by the conjurer. A good colour scheme and a few bars of good music will appeal to such people, and will thus help to put them under the influence of the man on the stage. I have often amused myself by noticing the behaviour of people—nice, well-bred people—when they have been under the spell of a good conjuring trick. They will do things which they would not dream of doing in their own homes. For example, in one of my tricks I produce a number of little cakes and have them handed round to the audience. I

have seen quite nice people scrambling among themselves to get some of those cakes worth about twopence each! But although such people will readily give themselves up to the conjurer's influence, they will not do quite all he wants them to do; they will not see a joke—as a rule—unless it is a joke in action. A spoken joke is often lost.

I am convinced that few people trouble to think how a conjurer does his tricks. They see the effects which the conjurer produces and are content. You may have a beautiful trick—from the conjurer's point of view—but without any telling effect, and therefore it goes for nothing with an ordinary audience. On the other hand, you may have a trick which is not thoroughly first-class—to an expert magician—but if the broad effect is telling it will please an average audience. It is not always the best trick which gets the most applause. You may have a superb trick which is so good that after you have done it you leave the audience limp with astonishment; they are too surprised to applaud.

"IF I BORROW A WATCH I KNOW THAT I AM ALWAYS SUSPECTED OF BORROWING FROM A CONFEDERATE."

I have often been asked which is my most successful trick, but I have never been able to answer the question. Sometimes a trick which is received almost in silence at the first house at an evening performance will be received with a burst of applause at the second house. Applause in a music-hall is often started by one man, and, although I never know the man, I always think he must be one of those rare individuals—a naturally good critic! There are very few such critics. The average man is led by a name in the advertisements, or he is influenced by a well-arranged boom, or by the fact that the performer has appeared before the Royal Family, and therefore must be wonderful! It does not follow.

I believe every conjurer is suspected of having confederates in the audience. If I borrow a watch when I am performing to a music-hall audience I know that I am always suspected of borrowing from a confederate, and only one man in the audience—the owner of the watch—knows that I do not use confederates.

A trick which ends with a good surprise is always most acceptable, and it always goes for all it is worth at the first house on a Monday evening. Later on in the week the effect of that trick is not so good, for the simple reason that audiences have told their friends about the big surprise. It is very difficult nowadays to get a trick with a thoroughly effective surprise.

When a friend tells me that he is going to see my performance I invariably beg him not to tell me when he is going, for I know that he may unwittingly upset my audience for me. If you know that you have a friend in the audience there is a great—an almost irresistible—tendency to play to that friend and ignore the rest of the audience. You must play to the whole mass or you fail to get them.

It is always a little disconcerting to find that one is popularly supposed to be able to do far more than one really does. Some little time ago I was travelling in a crowded carriage. Two girls got in and began talking in rather loud voices, so that the regular travellers could not read their papers in comfort. One man gave one of the girls a paper, hoping to keep her quiet. She was most indignant, and, to my great surprise—for I did not know that she had recognized me—appealed to me to turn the gentleman into a white pigeon and make him fly out of the window. It was a most awkward moment for me, and the man on whom I was invited to experiment seemed rather annoyed about it, but he need not have been, for I was not carrying any white pigeons about with me that morning.

I often wonder if my audiences really think that my tricks are not tricks, that there is, in fact, something uncanny about them. I have heard of people who think this, and I know that spiritualists have often credited me with making use of unseen forces. The suggestion pleases me; I am flattered. When people tell me that some of my tricks are something more than tricks I know that I have produced the right effect on their minds—the effect I invariably try to produce on the minds of all my audiences.

An Affair of Sentiment

By ROLAND PERTWEE

ILLUSTRATED BY F·GILLETT·R·I·

THE big car glided swiftly down the long descent and took the hairpin bend at the hill-foot over fast. There was a loud report, followed by an expiring hiss and the jolt-jolt-jolt as the rim of the offside rear wheel thumped the metalled surface of the road.

"Oh!" said Jill. "What's a good word to use?"

"Having already had recourse to both our spare wheels," replied Lord Louis, "I doubt if a single word would adequately define the situation."

"I suppose I want tea more than ever I wanted it before."

"Your chances of getting any are as small as your need is great."

Jill pouted at him, then smiled.

"Louis," she said, "if you are going to be sententious, I shall walk to Dublin, even if it's a hundred miles."

The car slowed up under the lee of a wind-riven oak growing in a distraught fashion from the fissures of a moss-covered rock.

"There should be a village hereabouts, m'lord," said the chauffeur, inclining his head towards a figure seated by the roadside on a heap of fallen slag.

Lord Louis Lewis and his wife turned in the direction indicated. The figure was that of a boy, or might have been a man, for there was an air of loutish uncertainty about him. He sat with legs sprawled out like the sides of an equilateral triangle. The legs were covered by knickerbockers which once had been trousers, and had arrived at their present state by the simple expedient of tearing off ten inches from the lower extremities. His shins were bare and his feet encased in wooden shoes filled with straw and what looked like thistles. His upper parts were covered by a shirt which, presumably in a moment of aberration, he had attempted to transform into knickerbockers, for the sleeves were torn off at the elbow. For the rest he wore a soft hat of a Mercury design, and gave token of æsthetic tastes by threading a poppy-stem through one of its many perforations.

"You are right," said Lord Louis, "for where there is an idiot there is inevitably a village to accommodate him."

"I think he's rather nice," said Jill.

"As a means towards obtaining some tea?"

"We might try."

They alighted, and the chauffeur pointed to a wire nail firmly embedded through the tire.

"It'll take best part of an hour, m'lord, to get the cover off and repair the tube. The solution they sold me is a bad drier."

"Well, do your best," said Lord Louis. "Come, Jill, we will endeavour to find your dream cottage in the meanwhile."

Her arm resting on his, they crossed and addressed the yokel.

"Good afternoon," said Jill.

For answer, the idiot gathered a handful of grass and thoughtfully wiped his nose upon it.

"A Druidical rite, perhaps," murmured Lord Louis. "The Irish peasantry have a great character for preserving ancient traditions. Could you tell me, my simple fellow, if there is a cottage hereabouts where we could obtain some tea?"

At this the loony rose and, crossing the road,

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"THE GENTLE RUSTIC CAPERED OFF DOWN THE ROAD WITH MANY TRIPS AND BECKONINGS. 'HE MEANS US TO FOLLOW,' SAID JILL. 'COME ALONG.'"

engaged in a careful inspection of the big automobile. After a while he turned, opened his mouth as though to voice an important opinion, and said :—

"Ss-s-s-sh."

"I made no remark," said Lord Louis, and Jill had to turn away her head, being far too nice a little person to laugh at anyone.

"S-s-s-s-hure and me name is Patrick."

"Renowned in these parts for the extermination of reptiles."

The idiot lurched his head towards the car.

"'Ss it broke up ?"

"Let us rather say the tyre has become deflated through the insinuating influences of a tenpenny nail."

"Louis, you are an idiot to fire off those long words at him," contributed Jill. "We want some tea."

"When in Rome!" came the plaintive rejoinder.

In the meantime the gentle rustic had capered off down the road with many trips and beckonings.

"He means us to follow," said Jill. "Come along."

A turn in the road revealed a village snugly nestling under the shoulder of a hill. An ideal village it proved to be—simplicity run loose. Roses rioted on the cottage fronts, chickens fluttered from the windows, and pigs walked in and out of the open doors in the friendliest way imaginable.

"Was there ever such a primitive little place! Look at the people! Aren't they just the simplest, duckiest folk you ever saw ?"

The idiot had stopped before a tiny cottage and was pointing darkly at the entrance. It was a very humble abode, clotted with climbing fuchsias and roses. A narrow flower-bed ran alongside the wall, margined with escallop shells and all alight with polyanthus. In the window was a slant, bearing apples, oranges, and a cardboard box of cough tablets, and above this, a narrow shelf of glass bottles filled with transparent sweets with lovely old-world names. A few slate pencils and a hank of leather bootlaces completed the stock, but faintly within shone the polished handles of an old elm dresser and bright specks of light from lustre candlesticks on the mantelpiece.

"It was worth bursting a tyre for this," exclaimed Jill.

Lord Louis gave the idiot a five-shilling piece and his benediction and rapped at the door.

If the house itself delighted them, their charm was not comparable to that aroused by the appearance of its owner. Of all sweet old ladies in the world, Jill vowed she was the sweetest. The gentle lines of her wrinkled features seemed to have been drawn by the kindliness of all the ages.

"Mrs. O'Donnel," he ventured, as the door opened. He had read the name written in simple characters, with the N's upside down, over the shop window.

The little old lady dropped the tiniest curtsy.

"Tis bether known as Mother I am," she said, with a rise and fall cadence—a sound such as the sea makes when it rustles the shore on a blue-calm day—then added, with a sadder note: "Though shmall enough raison they have to name me so."

And Jill's quick intuition led her to see that Mother O'Donnel wore no ring upon the third finger of her left hand.

"Our car has broken down," said Lord Louis, "and a simple fellow told us perhaps you could give us some tea."

"If 'tis tay ye'll be afther wanting, enter and welcome, for the kettle has been singing visitors this half an hour past."

She stood aside for her guests to pass.

"Oh, what a darling shop," exclaimed Jill, ecstatically. "Louis, look! Isn't it just the umptiest!"

Mother O'Donnel smiled at their obvious delight.

"Shmall but clane, m'dyurr," she said, "for 'tis meself would niver slape av nights if dust or tar-r-nish were to kape me company."

Jill turned and nodded understandingly.

"You must be happy here with this for your very own."

At these words a flicker of sadness passed over the old features.

"I could be happier if it were more me own, but Mother O'Donnel was niver one to airr her graivences to a stranger. 'Sides, 'tis tay ye'll be saking and not a tale of flint-hearrted landlords nor mortgage overrdue."

She opened an inner door and led them into a tiny parlour—so small that there was barely room to navigate the shiny-topped table which formed its centre of interest. In endeavouring to do so the pocket of Lord Louis' heavy motoring coat caught in the handle of a cupboard and pulled it a trifle ajar.

"Wisha!" exclaimed Mother O'Donnel, coming quickly to the rescue and closing the cupboard, "were there iver four walls so close together? There! give me the coat and I'll set it in the shop out av harrm's way."

So Lord Louis divested himself, while Mother O'Donnel departed to the kitchen to "see to the kettle and crisp some scones."

Meanwhile Lord Louis

was cruising slowly round the miniature apartment assessing its contents with an approving eye.

"A glorious surface Time and Mother O'Donnel have imparted to this old dresser. Plain elm, and yet it glows like lacquer!" He picked up a pewter pounce-box. "H'm, charming shape, beautifully kept, but alas, not anterior to the fire of London. Curious thing, the rustic adherence to grocers' calendars—spreads overseas—Picardy is alive with them—and yet they go—somehow they go!"

Jill did not interfere when the connoisseur side of his nature became uppermost. She had married a man who was wedded to the antique, but he had never allowed this trait to lead him to infidelity to the modern. Wherefore she, too, took a hand in the game, and contributed:—

"Isn't that lustre lovely!"

He shook his head.

"I don't like it. A chemical process. After all, a mirror is better flat."

He stopped short before the mantelpiece, his right hand raised and rubbing the tip of his nose. Jill had learnt the meaning of that action and followed the direction of his gaze. His eyes were held, it seemed, by a small round teapot with a straight spout which stood upon a greenish plate of no pronounced colour. The teapot was decorated with a panel representing, in many bright tints, a group of Chinese figures variously employed.

"H'm," ejaculated Lord Louis, and again "H'm!" He threw a quick glance over his shoulder, then turned again to the object of interest.

"Kien-lung?" said Jill, who was very painstaking.

Lord Louis removed the lid—examined it inside and out—replaced it—glanced at the greenish plate, nodded, then carried the teapot to the light, where he held it near the eye and at arm's length.

"*Kien-lung?*" repeated Jill.

He turned and smiled at her over his shoulder.

"What it is," he remarked, "to be the wife of a collector." And with that he set it down again upon the plate.

"Oh! exciting," exclaimed Jill. "Louis, you must buy it for me whatever it costs."

He shook his head, saying:—

"I am heartily ashamed of you."

"It's quite fair—the poor old thing's bound to be hard up—said she was."

"And for that reason you propose to despoil her castle of its teapot and the little plate upon which it stands."

"But if you pay her properly. 'Sides, I don't want the plate, silly."

"Women are wonderful," he observed.

And Jill countered.

"You wouldn't have rubbed your nose if you hadn't meant to buy it."

"Perhaps I was thinking."

"Then stop thinking at once, 'cos I'm going to have it whether you want me to or not."

The door opened and Mother O'Donnel, bearing a tray, came into the room. She looked toward Lord Louis whose hand was still resting upon the teapot. A flicker of alarm furrowed her brow and, setting down the tray with an odd protective gesture, she placed herself between her guest and the mantelshelf.

"Ah, now, forgive me, but it's frightened I am, lest an accident might befall it."

Lord Louis inclined his head.

"A treasured possession?" he ventured.

Mother O'Donnel made no reply, but in her eyes there kindled the gentlest lustre, and she nodded.

"I, too," he said, "cherish deep regard for the inanimate."

The old lady took the teapot and the little plate and set it upon the table, and while she measured out some tea from a Coronation caddy she said:—

"It has been me only friend these forty-siven years."

"Tea," observed Lord Louis, offering a scone to Jill, "is a great comforter, and not the least of the blessings which come to us from the East."

But Jill had her own methods of approaching a subject, by paths no less circuitous than her husband's.

"You were speaking of the mortgage on this cottage," she remarked innocently. "Won't you tell us more about it?"

"What more is there to tell, me dyurr. The mortgage is as old as me tinancy and past a doubt will survive it. For where would an old woman turn for twenty-five pounds with which to pay it off?"

"You might sell something, you know," said Jill, throwing a glance of awful meaning at her husband, who preserved an irritating pre-occupation with a scone.

Mother O'Donnel shook her head.

"Ah, now, don't fret yourself with another's troubles."

"Yes, but——"

"Is the tay to your liking?"

"Lovely—but—Mrs. O'Donnel, my husband is very interested in old things. I'm sure he'd buy something of yours as a souvenir of our visit. He said he would while you were boiling the kettle—didn't you, Louis?"

He smiled engagingly from one to the other. "Coveteousness is the curse of being a collector," he said. "If my wife were to perform her duty she would upbraid rather than encourage me."

"He wants to buy the——" a sudden flash of craft changed the order of the phrase—"that little green plate and perhaps the old teapot. He'd pay you—ten pounds—wouldn't you, Louis?"

"A good husband invariably agrees with his wife," came the rejoinder.

"Wouldn't you like to sell them for that?" queried Jill.

But Mother O'Donnel had dropped her eyes and her old hand was plucking at the table-cloth in a queer aimless fashion.

When she looked up they saw that her eyes were misted with tears.

"Oh, please," cried Jill, "I hope we haven't offended you."

"LORD LOUIS REMOVED THE LID—EXAMINED IT INSIDE AND OUT—REPLACED IT—NODDED, THEN CARRIED THE TEAPOT TO THE LIGHT."

"No, no, 'twas kindly mint. Ye don't ondershtand, that's all!" She took a sharp staggering breath, then, "Or mebbe it's jist a joke ye're having. Tin pound for an old taypot and a bit of a plate to kape the heat from milking the polish."

"But it's a lovely teapot."

"And we, too, have a polished table," added Lord Louis, which was a silly remark to make.

"Like enough—like enough."

"Wouldn't it be worth while selling them for that?" persisted Jill.

"Ye don't ondersthand," was the only answer.

Jill looked at Lord Louis, but his eyes were coldly fixed upon the ceiling. For the first time she understood how hard the collector spirit can make a man. Quite obviously he was freezing his subject, and for that reason alone she took up the reins and jumped the price.

"Fifteen pounds," she said. "Fifteen."

"Seventeen ten," said Lord Louis, raising his hand as though he were at an auction.

And then they received the surprise of their lives, for the old woman struck the table a clean, smart blow.

"Stoppit," she cried; "phwat sort of people are ye to run a sale unasked in a poor woman's house and timpt her to the greatest av sacrifices? Would ye sell the hair of a dead child for a sthranger's money? Would ye barther a packet of love-letthers for ony sum of gol' or siller? Nay, thin, let me be—let be!"

"I am sorry," said Jill, "we didn't know."

As quickly as it came the tempest departed and the old woman laid a hand on the sleeve of Jill's gown.

"Nay, nay. I shouldna have spoken so—ye touched me raw, that was it. Sure and av course ye wouldna be exshpected to ondersthand. 'Twas kindly mint and the A'mighty knows the blissing the money would ha' proved, but there's things beyont money—there's mimories."

"Then please forget our indiscretion," said Lord Louis. "We betrayed, I fear, a great want of gallantry, which I heartily deplore."

"It's over and forgotten."

"You teach us a lesson in civility, madam, but will you allow me before we put the matter finally aside to state that had your feelings been otherwise, I should have been prepared to increase my offer to the sum of twenty pounds."

The old woman's eyes opened wide, and the corner of her mouth twitched.

"Ye must be a rich man," she said.

"I mention the fact not in any hope of weakening your resolve, but merely in the event of your reverting, in future conversation, to this episode that you may be able to quote to your listeners the good round figure you were great enough to refuse for these little examples of the Ceramic art. Thank you, I should enjoy another cup," he said, leaning back in his chair and stretching his legs.

It is probable the matter would have ended at this point had not Jill been struck by the curious similarity in shape between the teapot and the first fruit mentioned in the Bible.

"Standing on that plate," she said, "it looks just like a pippin on a green leaf. Doesn't it, Louis?"

"'Where the apple reddens never pry,'" he quoted, "'Lest we lose our Edens, Eve and I.'"

They were hardly conscious that the old woman had begun to speak, her voice fell gently to their ears, like down-drifting leaves in autumn-time. With hands resting upon the rough white cloth, and eyes which looked back across a valley of years, she spoke, and an infinite sadness trembled through the simple sentences of the tale she told.

"And iverywhere ye heard it said that me fayther was a hard man. For many years he had followed the sea and the salt av it bitthered his spache long afther he abandoned the tiller for the handle of a plough. Me mither she uphild him, mebbe for raison o' the prosperity they shared togither. A nip o' frost me mither was likened to, and 'twas the same as an aist wind to have spache with me fayther. Sthrange, but I inherited the qualities of nayther, for though wayward enough me heart had an impulse of warmth that the chill o' their company couldna dishpel. Th' was a loveless house, but youth has a gladness of its own that nayther folk nor advarsity can conquer. I would run from it all and lie in the deep grass meadows and dream and imagine. Ach, but ye know well enough the tilt of a young maid's thoughts when the birds sing love-songs in the neighbouring thickets and the sun is drenching her with its pure warm goodness. I wud fancy meself sought afther by kings and princes or that some sthrolling minstrel would break his music at sight o' me and fall to whispering instead."

"Um—um!" said Jill.

"It was nayther prince nor king who found me so, but a simple hireling lad—a teamster from a farm two valleys distant. Six feet he shtood, a shtray black lock twishting from under his hat and falling athwart the brow av him. Wisha! wisha! I can see him now, his feet square planted and the blue wide-open eyes looking down upon me as I lay. I had been ashlape and taken anawares, put out a hand to draw the shkirt over me ankles for viry modeshty. 'Be aisy,' he said, quick to read the shyness of the movement, 'would ye cover a beauty that no dacint man could choose but reshpect?'

"And being young we laughed at that and he sat beside me on the grass and we fell into talk.

"That was the beginning av it; 'twas a secret friendship of the twilight and the moon."

Jill nodded with sympathy, her eyes glistening.

"Tell me," she said, "of the first time he kissed you."

"Jist seemed to happen," came the answer. "We were shtanding by a brook—there was a curl of water and shomwhere a bird rustled in the leaves near by—just seemed to happen."

"Oh, lovely! And—and—did you marry him?"

"No." The voice struck a dead note—almost as though the story were at its end.

"Oh, but please!" exclaimed Jill, "you must have married him—you must have."

"Me fayther came to know. It was that same night. A dog fox barked in the valley—an ill omen that! We met me fayther where the woods turn to meadows. 'Very pretty,' sez he, and though the wind set gentle from the south we could feel the aist cut across our faces like a whip thong. 'And phwat is my Sheila doing on the arm of a dung-cart driver?' With that Mishael, for so he was named, loosed his hold upon me and shtepped a pace forward. 'The divil sthrike the legs from under ye,' he cried with a fury av which I could never belave he was masther. And he repated it while me fayther leant upon his blackthorn and shmiled. 'Pritty phrase,' he sez thin, with an eye cocked toward me. 'Does he favour ye with love-talk on such iligant lines? Be it so. Thin his absince will improve upon his company. Take the hedge-gap yander, Misther Muckcart, for I'd remind ye this meadow is mine and I've no taste for treshpassers.' 'Misther O' Donnel,' sez Mishael, as bould as brass, 'I've had a repitation in m' time as a poacher, mebbe rightly, mebbe wrongly—but I'll tell ye this much: Whin I visit another man's presarves I have niver left 'em impty handed.' 'Being nayther praste nor justice,' returned me fayther, 'y' confessions are wasted upon me. Wish ye good night.' And he took me arm and shtarted homeward. But my Mishael had the courage av a rigiment and barred the path wi' arms folded across the breast av him. 'Shtand aside,' meniced me fayther with a grip upon his blackthorn. 'Phwhat sort of a tay party is ut whin a man cannot choose his own company?' 'Tis like to be the sort ye'll have to saison yoursel' to,' came the answer, 'for she and I ha' chosen ours a'ready, and nayther divil nor spirk will wrest her hand from the taypot I mane to drink from.' 'And phwhere's the money to come from that will fill ut? 'Tis aisier to impty yer mouth av words than fill yer pockets wi' siller, me bhoy. Is ut five or four shillins a wake O'Mara pays ye to fork his midden?' St. Pathrick ridded Ireland of shnakes, but faith!

he lift the vinom behind, and me faythers tongue was soaked in ut. Mishael's face wint dull crimson like the sun falling on a mishty evening. 'Thrue 'tis me fortune's yet unmade,' he whispered, low and ominous, 'but I've a clane heart and a sthrong arm, and Mother of Mary there's no dade I'd not perform to put a ring on Sheila's finger.' Ochone! but he was a crafty man me faythers, and the words set a thought to work in the cold brain av him. 'That's a bether spirit,' sez he; 'we'll walk to the farm and talk the question out.' Not a word was shpoken on the way, but whin we enthered the kitchen he tould me mither the lean o' things, and she rounded on Mishael wi the fury av a wild cat whose kittens have been dishturbed. For a space me faythers let her rage, then crisply bade her hould her pace. ''Tis none so bad as its seeming,' he sez, 'for this pritty suitor declares he will conquer iny advarsity to call our Sheila bride. Isn't that the truth, me bhoy?' and Mishael nodded. 'I would cross the world a hundred times if I might sit to tay wi Sheila at the end av ut.' 'Why, thin, me bhoy, ye shall sit to tay with her at the beginning av ut and taste yer future swateness. Lay a cloth, woman, and set four cups and plates.' With a dale of grumbling she obeyed, and as he sated himself I could see the big hands av him all a thrimble. At me faythers direction she brought from the cupboard the bist taypot, a piece he cherished oncommon high, having brought ut from China seas whin little more than lad and risked his life, so the story ran, in bringing ut away."

"Oh, how exciting," exclaimed Jill; "and this is the one!"

Lord Louis raised the lid of the teapot and examined it afresh with an added interest.

"Do go on."

"Not that one, as ye shall hear.' As I told ye me mither set it by Mishael's elbow and wint to the shtove for the kittle while he sat there, a dishpairful look upon his face. At the sight av him me faythers laughed. 'Was iver so long-faced a lover?' sez he. 'I wud ha' thought so mittlesome a lad wud ha' sat wi' an arm about his swateheart's waist. Afther all it may prove a long parting, for fortunes are not gathered like shards upon a highway.' 'I court in me own fashion,' replied Mishael, with a show of bravado, 'but since ye suggest it——' and he drew back his arm to throw around me. Mother av Mercy, whin one thinks av the little things that deshtroy the happiness av life!"

She stopped and thrust the palms of her hands over her eyes.

"One wonders if there is a God at all."

"What happened?"

"'Twas just that shmall action! The slave av his coat fouled the spout av the taypot and with a crash it shtruck the brick floor and shmithered into atoms. Will I iver forgit the scane that followed! Sudden as it came the shtorm ceased and me faythers pointed a finger to the fragments on the floor. ''Twas wan av two,' he sez, 'in a praste's house back o' a little temple at Nansing on the Yang-tse. I tuk a knife-thrust in me shoulder to pay for ut, aye, and was pursued a hundrid miles down river before I shook off the yillow divils who were

"SHE STOPPED AND THRUST THE PALMS OF HER HANDS OVER HER EYES. 'ONE WONDERS IF THERE IS A GOD AT ALL,' SHE CRIED."

afther me. And now 'tis smithered by a reeking rabbit-snatcher who shovels dung for a livelihood. Ye try to shteal me daughter and ye smash me home. By God ye shall right that sicond wrong 'fore iver ye shall clap an eye on her agin.' 'Twas an accident,' shtammered Mishael; 'show me the way to right ut and I will.' And shtill pointing at the floor me fayther answered, 'There were two of them—go aist and bring the second here.' 'An' if I do?' 'If you do, then, mebbe'—he nodded toward me—'ye might ask with better chance av success.' Mishael thought awhile, thin 'How do I know there is a second?' 'Ye've my word.' 'Ye might be fooling me!' 'Hiven made ye fool enough.' 'S'pose I wint and that, too, was bruk?' 'Why, thin,' replied me fayther, 'ye'll find an opium house in any China town where, if ye smoke deep enough, ye can imagine a pritty wedding in the afther slape.' Mishael set his jaw and shtruck the table a blow. 'I'll do ut,' he cried, and me fayther shmiled, his thin lips curling down. 'Ye women can lave us,' sez he. Phwhat happened afterward I don't rightly know. Me fayther directed him I s'pose and passed a paper with a drawing on ut. He gave him a note, too, to a ship's captain at Kingstown harbour. I waited outside in the moonlight. Prisintly I heard a shtep and found Mishael beside and his arms around me. "'Shh,' he whispered, 'no tears, mavourneen, 'tis a grand quest I'm afther. I'll find the taypot niver doubt and a fortune in ut. Think just av the day whin I'll be back and ye shall take ut in yer hand and fill me cup wi' everlashting happiness.' Thin he kissed me and I watched him go out av the grey into the black av night."

"And did he come back?" questioned Jill.

"The saisons came and wint, ten years passed by, but nayther word nor sight av him. Other lads came courting me, but I wud ha' none av 'em, though me fayther scorned and me mither railed at me. Me word had been given and I waited on me lover to return. It was in the fall of the ninth year me fayther died and me mither, mebbe she could not thrust him alone, followed a six weeks later. For all their showing, they left little enough behind. Part av this cottage I bought with me inheritance and spint the rist furnishing a shelf av sweets and bootlaces to kape starvation from the door. "'Tis on'y for a little while,' I tould meself, 'for Mishael is on the way—he's on the way.'

"'Twas a bitther winter that followed—the snow drift in the valley yander was six feet deep and more. Night was settin' in and I mind dhrawing a stool to the fire, and warming me hands and thinking how chill and lonesome the world could be for a woman alone. And settin' there I heard a knock to the strate door. 'Twas onlikely anyone wud be abroard, and I hesitated to belave me ears. But prisintly the sound repeated, and above the timpest I heard a voice which cried 'Opin for the love av God.' In a thrice I had the bolts drawn and the wind threw back the door upon its jambs. Leaning against the house side, his back toward the night, stud a man—but Merciful Mary! 'twas more like a corpshe he looked. In tatthers he was dreshed, and the faytures av him were set in hollow caverns like the face of a granite quarry blashted into light and shadow. Clutched to his breast was something wrapped in a bit av sacking.

"'Who are ye so ill clad in such a weather?' sez I. He made to answer, but a fit of coughing took him, and niver have I seen a man so shaken by the evil. 'Whoever ye are come into the warmth,' sez I, and putting an arm about him I led him here and set him in a chair before the fire. All the while his eyes rested upon me with a look indishcribable—'twas as though his hunger for something were being appeased by the very sight av me. 'There,' sez I, 'sit ye quiet while I put a kettle to boil and fetch ye a blanket.' Thin it was he laughed—a queer laugh—more av a cough it was—and spoke. 'Aye, boil the kittle, mavourneen, and we'll dhrink our tay togither,' and with shaking hands he drew the wrappings from the object he had held to his breast and set *this little taypot upon the table.* I lookt from him to it, sthumbled a pace forward, and dhropped me head upon his knees. 'Nay, no tears,' he begged, his fingers playing in me hair. 'I'm back, mavourneen—phwhat's left av me. Have I kep' ye waiting over long?' Thin I tuk his head upon me shoulder and pillowed it there for a long, long while and not a word passed bethween us. But where his coat slave was torn I saw the white flesh av him was scarred and dhrawn in a dozen places. 'Twas not the worst av ut!' sez he, reading the direction av me eyes; 'yer fayther had a grim wit whin he sint me on such an errant. Five years they kept me in a prison with three inches av wather on the floor. That was afther the first time I thried, and failed. Then I eshcaped and attimpted again. I hid ut safe before the divils caught me. They dhrew fine wire over me limbs and with a razor——"

Mother O' Donnel broke off short and sat back in her chair with clenched fists.

"If iver I rache Hiven," she cried, "one favour on'y shall I ask. To spind a day in hell and satisfy miself that the coals are banked high round the man who was me fayther."

"And what happened?" said Jill.

The fire burnt out of the old woman's eyes and the distant look returned.

"We dhrank our tay togither that night," she said, "and afther I tuk him upon me lap like the child av me own I shall niver nurse, and cradled him. He died as the dawn broke—forty-siven years ago."

There was a low, mechanical hum outside the shop, and a moment later the door opened and Lord Louis' chauffeur entered.

"The tyre is O.K. now, m'lord," said the man.

Jill did not seem aware of his entrance. She was doing something to her eyes with an entirely ridiculous chiffon handkerchief, but Lord Louis rose to his feet and produced his pocket-book.

"We are infinitely indebted, madam," he said. "Edwards, my coat is in the shop yonder." From the case he took a number of bank-notes. "Will you tell us what we owe you?"

Mother O'Donnel roused herself and lifted

her eyes to the level of his hands. They riveted there for a space before she spoke.

"Ye ondershtand now why I cannot oblige ye?"

"Perfectly."

"Ye think me a foolish old woman, perhaps?"

"On the contrary, a memory such as yours could hardly be sold for twenty-five pounds."

"Twinty-five?"

"A mere figure of speech."

"With twinty-five pounds I could pay the mortgage—I——"

"Come, Jill," said Lord Louis, "we have lingered too long as it is. A thousand thanks, Mrs. O'Donnel, for your gracious entertainment." He moved toward the door.

"Wait! Mebbe such a chance might niver come agin. I'm old—too old to pay the price av houlding that mimory. Ye'd give me——"

"Assuredly."

Mother O'Donnel seemed to come to a sudden resolution, and opening a drawer in the dresser took out a sheet of paper and with averted eyes wrapped it quickly round the teapot.

"Take ut—take ut 'fore I change me mind."

Lord Louis laid five bank-notes upon the table and picked up the small green plate.

"This," he said, "I can carry in my pocket."

"As you plaze!" came the staggering answer; "but go—go quickly."

She came as far as the shop door and watched them climb into the car and drive away. As they turned the corner at the village end Jill saw her still standing there, the old hands pressed convulsively to the withered, barren breasts.

In the turn of the road where the woods thinned to the village a simple fellow with poppies in his hair was busily employed. Men take their pleasures in different ways, and this engaging rustic was taking his by burying wire nails point upward on the metal surface of the road.

Mother O'Donnel turned slowly into the shop and entered the parlour beyond. Her watery eyes looked down at the table—and the price of her sacrifice.

"Twenty-five pounds," she muttered. "Ach, well!"

She moved across the room and opened the cupboard door. On the shelf was a row of china teapots identical in design to the one Lord Louis had purchased. She took the nearest and placed it in the centre of the mantelpiece.

"MOTHER O'DONNEL TOOK A SHEET OF PAPER AND WITH AVERTED EYES WRAPPED IT QUICKLY ROUND THE TEAPOT."

Jill did not address a word to her husband until they had covered nearly three miles, and then her remark was crisp and to the point.

"I hate you—I think you are a beast."

"Don't say that," he replied, "for I was about to increase your scope of knowledge." He paid no attention to her silence and proceeded: "The Imitation Oriental China Factory of Newcastle, which started its inglorious career four years ago last autumn, distinguish their wares from those of any other firm by placing two cobalt dots on the underside." He undid the paper parcel and inverted the little teapot for her inspection. "There they are, you see?"

Jill opened her eyes very wide.

"Louis!" she exclaimed, "but if that's true——"

"After long abstinence," he observed, "it is always refreshing to return to the truth."

"The old devil," said Jill—then—"but you were deceived as well—or why did you give the twenty-five pounds?"

For answer he drew from his pocket the little green plate and remarked:—

"A piece of really good quality Celadon is always worth buying. Of course I paid rather highly, but she gave us an excellent tea."

"MUDIE'S."

The Diamond Jubilee of a Great Library.

By JAMES MILNE.

Illustrated by A. Ferrier.

MUDIE'S has been the mirror of fashion in English literature for three-quarters of a century, this very year. It is not simply a name for a great circulating library, but a national institution. Mudie's is a tradition for the general stream of English reading in its time, and so also for English authorship, because the two live on each other. Therefore it is not too much to say that here has been a clearing-house for English thought, habits, and deeds, as these have swung into the eternal Sea of Print.

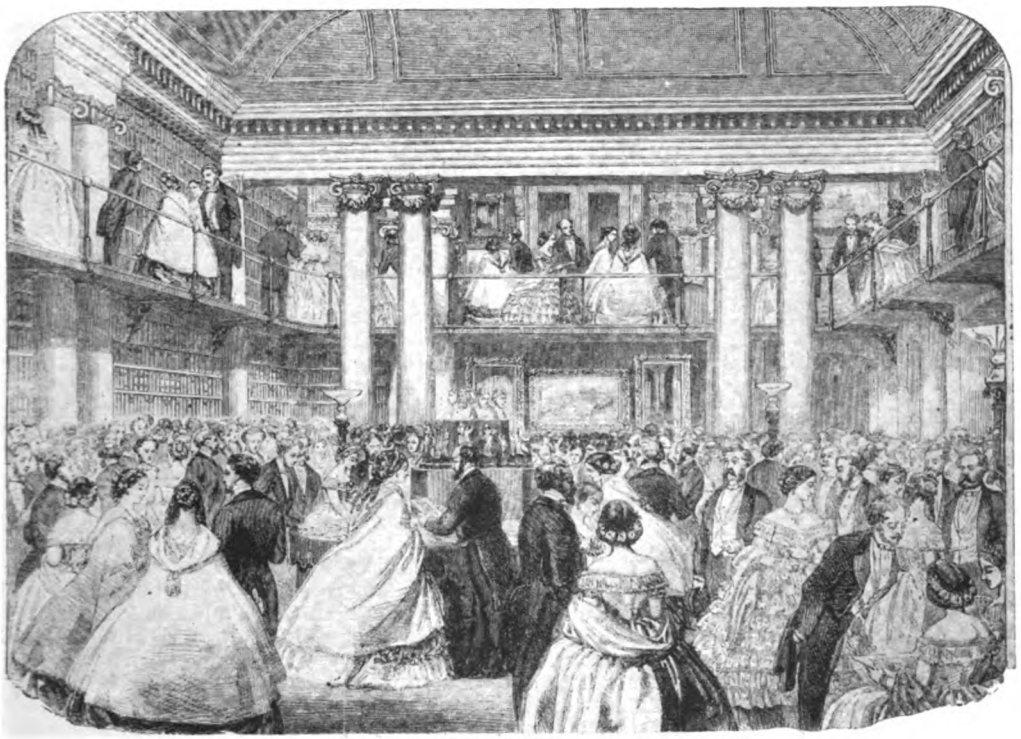
Certainly, if you want to know the real English reader, man or woman, in particular the reader of London Society and the London middle classes, you must go and ask Mudie. "He, being dead, yet speaketh"; for the spirit of Charles Edward Mudie, who invented the modern circulating library, still lives in New Oxford Street, across from the British Museum. Personality was in it all, as it is in everything original or lasting, and the Mudie Touch has not lost itself to-day, as we shall see.

THE LATE MR. CHARLES EDWARD MUDIE.

From a photograph in the possession of his son, the present head of the firm, Mr. Arthur Mudie.

Do you happen, yourself, to be in a public line of business? If so you will, now and then, get queer, weird letters from people. You keep those letters, because they are a hall-mark of confidence in you. Mudie's archives contain epistles like that, one of them dated as recently as March last. "Please," it says, "be so good as to reply to my letter respecting the book entitled 'Harry Stottell's Works.'" You need a moment to discover that the request was for "Aristotle's Works"! "Send me," another subscriber wrote, 'Bath Under Bone Ash,'" instead of "Bath Under Beau Nash"! Particularly wanted was "The Uncomical Traveller," by Charles Dickens, but the applicant only got "The Uncommercial Traveller." More difficult to meet was the demand, "If you haven't anything recent by Julius Cæsar, give me something about him." It was the war which brought to Mudie's an order for "Blackmore's Alsace-Lorraine." Most likely a prompt copy of his novel, "Alice Lorraine," caused disappointment. It took longer to puzzle out "A Darn Bee," by "Gelliott," as George Eliot's "Adam Bede." Of course, "Green Car Nation" meant that once stirful novel, "The Green Carnation." "Paternoster Row," by George Gissing, was identified as implying his "New Grub Street."

Many well-known people have been constant readers and visitors at Mudie's; some, what you might call "habitués." Gladstone, the last English superstatesman who pilgrimaged among the old bookshops in search of a "find," was frequently in the library. He was never in quest of new books, which, indeed, fell upon him at Hawarden like leaves, thanks to authors hopeful of an acknowledging postcard. What he sought was a likely bargain in some volume or edition that concerned his own subjects, say Bishop Butler or Horace. If he knew Gardiner, the historian, and Samuel Butler, the author of "Erewhon,"



A LITERARY REUNION IN THE HALL AT MUDIE'S.
From the "Illustrated London News," 1860.

he might easily have run against them at Mudie's, for they were often there. So was Richard Garnett, of the British Museum, and certainly the G.O.M. knew and esteemed him as a Grand Old Bookman. Another frequent visitor was Cardinal Manning, a smiling pillar of asceticism, embodying the faith and traditions of the Middle Ages transmuted into the spirit of modern progress.

Oh! Mudie's has caught the echo of many a famous foot, the Ionic columns in the large saloon have looked down on many a face with a name. One picturesque figure was David Christie Murray, the novelist, in his velveteen jacket, mostly the same jacket. More picturesque still was Whistler, the artist, who would look in and ask whether anybody was reading his "Gentle Art of Making Enemies." Not many people were, when it was new, but copies of the book are now worth stealing. Darwin's "Origin of Species" appeared in 1859, four years after Mudie had moved from Southampton Row, where he began most modestly in 1844. There had been "The Voyage of the *Beagle*" in 1840, and there was to be "The Descent of Man" in 1871. These books, with the corresponding writings of Thomas Henry Huxley, Alfred Russel Wallace, John Tyndall, and other master men, stood for perhaps the greatest single leap forward in knowledge that the world has known, and they took their message through the door of Mudie's and out again.

Science and religion! Mudie's looked on at the conflict, was a good servant in it, although we, in more charted waters, can now see that there was no conflict but merely a new assessing of values. "Draper's Conflict" was a target in the fray, and yet how often, in this present year of grace, has a battered copy of it had to be handed over Mudie's counter? Hardly ever, one ventures to say. Then the song of social reform came piping down New Oxford Street in William Morris's "Dream of John Bull," and "News from Nowhere." The note of spiritualism, meaning, broadly, belief in another life in another world, was sounded by F. W. Myers. It has been echoed still more definitely by Sir Oliver Lodge, Father Hugh Benson, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and a growing host of writers.

The ghosts of many a cause, won, lost, or still in doubt, walk the corridors of Mudie's. They knew the blast that Mrs. Lynn Linton blew out of the west for the woman's movement. Dear lady! what a daring person she was supposed to be, and so dangerous! She was earlier than Sarah Grand and "The Heavenly Twins," and maybe she was not as "advanced." It was her friend, amiable Grant Allen, who carried the woman's red flag of revolt to the hill-top and there planted it. Again Mudie has looked on the pageant of progressive ideas, taking his part in it, more, or less, or refusing to take any part as he conceived right, from

A BUSY SCENE AT THE COUNTER IN BYGONE DAYS.

the standpoint of a "select library." But always he was there, always he was going out into the world with his boxes of books.

Most folk think only of Mudie's in novels, which is quite wrong, and yet, in a sense, quite right. The great traffic has been in novels and so will be, for the simple reason that the story is the literary thing common to everybody, old and young, educated or not. The traffic in other writings, biography and autobiography, travel and history, *belles-lettres* and poetry, is also, however, very great. The ordeal of our long war-time has made it greater, and yet the return of the average reader, the reader in mass, is ever to the novel. Why not? Everything comes within it. Nothing, nowadays, is left out of it, assuredly not if Mr. H. G. Wells can help that.

Most men read novels for recreation, as Lord Russell of Killowen used to read a "shocker" after a hard day, and as Mr. Lloyd George does to-day. Therefore men send their office-boys to Mudie's for stories with stir and "go" in them, and sometimes, maybe, for others, not always "in stock," which cry a different appeal. But "action" is the man's fodder in fiction, the blow and the blood, unless he be a "literary fellow," and then he seeks, often, anyhow, the "analytical novel."

Now, the woman, whether she be governed alone by her sex-instinct or by that set in a framing of intelligence, education, intellect, is a better novel-reader than a man. She begins, though she may not know it, with a full understanding of the title of Charles Lamb's essay: "The Pleasures of Anticipation." That is what every woman knows on the literary high-road, and naturally it carries her over the hills and far away in the pages of fiction. She reads, if she be any real woman at all, for a stimulus of thought and feeling, which, in her case, may be more powerful, and, therefore, even when she reads rubbish, she reads seriously, throwing herself into what she reads, whereas a man does not. Watch respectfully, because also seriously, how a woman will regard a shelf of new library novels from which she means to choose one. Red, blue, green! Colours speak to her, and most likely she will in turn pick out three stories so bound. Their titles, the melody and promise of them—that is important; their endings, happy or unhappy—that is vital, for no woman likes a bad ending, even in a story! She makes her choice quickly, as the man of Scripture was bidden to sit down and write quickly, and most likely she chooses well.

Mudie's business takes the form of thousands of books circulating hither and thither, and never, happily, all coming home at once, because there would not be room to store them. They travel oversea in tin-lined boxes so well made that on occasion these have gone down into great waters and been fished up again without harm befalling the contents. There also are the "catacombs" below New Oxford Street in which Mudie stores his retired and retiring literary battalions. It is a sad and ghostly land of forgotten names and forgotten tomes, but, oh, so peaceful! Nobody is there at night when the rats, inevitable under ground, sally forth, seeking literature to devour. Once their supper consisted of four novels entitled "The Brilliant Peggy," "The Loves of Miss Anne," "Juicy Joe," and "Love Among the Ruins." Why not?

There were circulating libraries before Mudie's, but they were different—"moribund reservoirs," somebody described them, "of dry and old-fashioned novels." You will find them, and the using of them, satirized in Sheridan's play, "The Rivals." They were contracted little affairs, working meanly and inwardly, rather than outwardly, in the spacious spirit which

OUTSIDE THE LIBRARY SIXTY YEARS AGO.

should go with books. Here came the high idea of Charles Edward Mudie, begotten partly, perhaps, of the smallness of his father's newspaper shop down beside Cheyne Walk, in Chelsea, where Thomas Carlyle lived later, partly perhaps from reading Milton, or some other seer, on the right mission of books. His idea was to scatter books, the best books, the product of the nation's best brains, by the thousand, nay, by the hundred thousand, throughout London and the towns and villages of the United Kingdom. He lived to do it and it goes on, though he has been in his grave for a quarter of a century.

Imagination is the parent of most large ventures which succeed, because imagination means simplicity. Mudie was a simple man, possessed by a simple idea, and, once he had launched it, it carried him far in the ocean of books and through some strange adventures. He was not a man who professed literature, but he was a good reader, with a taste for poetry, and he had an instinct for all books. It was this, perhaps, as much as a sound grip on the safe business road, which led him to be named "Dictator of the London Literary World." "So," Carlyle said to him at one of Lady Ashburnham's receptions, "you are the man who undertakes to supply the world with books, to divide the sheep from the goats; a very serious thing, eh?"

Leave it to Mudie! That came to be a saying, and he did his best to live up to it, always bearing in mind that his responsibility was a business in the form of a family library. Let a wolf in sheep's clothing creep into one of his boxes, let it go to some vicarage or quiet rural home, and where would he be? Mudie's was really by way of being a family newspaper which had a large circulation in the print and paper of other people. Naturally, in that circumstance, he elected for the safe line, even when someone might charge him with being unheroic. He was a librarian, not a hero; but when he got books after his heart and his judgment, he could be all the hero, bold, venturesome, daring to a degree which made the old book-world of London hum with excitement.

"Why," sarcastically demanded an author who had felt Mudie's "tyranny," "didn't you refuse to circulate 'Bleak House' because of the character of Mr. Chadband?" The works of Dickenss old more widely than those of any other Victorian novelist, but much of their circulation was in "part form" and Mudie did not need so many as in different circumstances he would have done. "Of course," he was upbraided, "you took thousands of 'Adam Bede' on account of Dinah Morris, the beautiful Methodist!" Poor man, he was apt to find himself wrong with some literary personage whatever he did, but that fear neither quenched his ardour nor his endurance, as the archives of his house, if you be admitted to their intimacy, make manifest.

When the third and fourth volumes of Macaulay's "History of England" appeared in December, 1855, he ordered two thousand five hundred copies of them. Fancy the stir this order made in the town department of our oldest publishers, the Longmans, of Paternoster Row. "Do you know the weight of this number? You don't! Well, the two volumes scale about seven pounds, so, if you add a few to the two thousand five hundred copies, you have a dead weight of nine tons. We can't deliver that in a hand-cart. Mudie will have to come and fetch his tons"; and Mudie did. Suppose, glancing over his archives, we record, in a simple but eloquent table, some of his other "big deals," thus:—

1857, "Livingstone's Travels in South Africa," 3,500 copies.

1859, "Tennyson's Idylls of the King," 1,000 copies.

1861, "Essays and

MUDIE'S SUBSCRIBERS OF A PAST AGE.

THE HALL AT MUDIE'S, AS IT IS TO-DAY.

Reviews" (an anonymous work which made as much stir in its day as "Lux Mundi" did in ours), 2,000 copies.

1861, George Eliot's "Silas Marner," 3,000 copies.

1868, Queen Victoria's "Journal of Our Life in the Highlands," 1,000 copies.

1869, McClintock's "Voyage of the *Fox*" in search of Franklin, 3,000 copies.

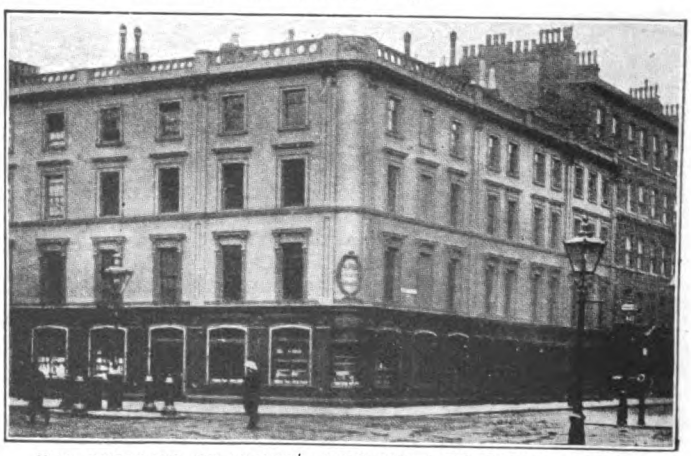
1878, Lady Brassey's "Voyage of the *Sunbeam*," 1,000 copies.

1880, Lord Beaconsfield's novel, "Endymion," in three volumes, 3,000 copies.

Those deals were repeated in spirit during the 'nineties, though Charles Edward Mudie, the pioneer, could not longer make them; for we find the library taking three thousand copies of Stanley's "Darkest Africa," a two-volume work, and two thousand five hundred copies of Lord Roberts's "Forty-One Years In India," also a two-volume book, at a large price. Of the "Life of Tennyson," by his son, the present holder of the title, Mudie's took two thousand and it made two volumes. Nansen's "Farthest North" begot an order for twelve hundred, Lord Morley's "Gladstone," in three volumes, one for a thousand, and Mr. Winston Churchill's biography of his father an order for a like number. Bear in mind always, that those were "advance orders," and therefore something of a gamble in what a particular book might achieve with the public. You need to be a prophet if you are to be a librarian, assuredly if you are to be Mudie's.

Its record first call for a contemporary novel was, probably, three thousand five hundred copies of Sir Hall Caine's "Christian," now a dim spectre on a fading horizon. With it there, and in figures at Mudie's, there is to be bracketed Miss Marie Corelli's "Master Christian," of which three thousand copies were needed. But later, and higher, comes Mrs. Humphry Ward's romance, "The Marriage of William Ashe" with a Mudie record of three thousand two hundred and sixteen copies. Be it noted that, since she first won literary fame, Mrs. Ward has been a "best circulator"—may this counterpart of "best seller" be invented?—at Mudie's, whose sound, solid English tastes, interesting but "safe," she well represents.

It was all different in the era of the comfortable three-volume novel, which Mudie brought to an end, just because it had finished its mission. Once it was, or was thought to be, a pillar of the circulating library, to be, in fact, its main support. Then in 1894 something happened and it died as a result of a "scrap of paper" signed, first by Mr. Arthur O. Mudie, then and now the chief of the house, in succession to his father; and by the other circulating libraries. There had been "The Green Carnation," for whose authorship a well-remembered name had been mentioned. Then there came "The Yellow Aster," of Mrs. Mannington Caffyn, and it "boomed" in the most magnificent way. Mudie's kicked, on business grounds, about being left with enormous cargoes of "three-deckers," and out of that rumpus was born the present six-shilling novel, which, by the way, the war has sent up to six and ninepence, and various other figures. It was thus, "unwept, unhonoured, and unsung," that the "three-decker," once the "only certain packet to the Islands of the Blest," went down, saluted by the brave old flag which flies over Mudie's—on red-letter days only!



THE EXTERIOR OF MUDIE'S LIBRARY, NEW OXFORD STREET.

A Grave Responsibility

By STACY AUMONIER

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK GILLETT R.I.

OLD Ben Tilbury yawned and knocked his pipe out against the bars of the stove. He had had a capacious tea, and felt at ease with the world. His wife sat opposite stitching some white linen garment. His daughter Mildred was kneeling on the floor, and by the light of a candle, to assist the uncertain glow of the paraffin lamp, was cutting out a skirt from a paper pattern.

These dressmaking activities always produced in him—as far as was possible in such a stolid nature—a mild feeling of irritation. Such a lot of fuss and talk! A restless, finicky job, dressmaking! He himself was a gardener, a man who dwelt in broad issues. He planted in the autumn for the spring, in the spring for the summer, slowly, methodically, reverently. It was big, noble work. Dressmaking? Why, what you made in the autumn was out of date, finished, in the spring!

He yawned again.

His wife remarked:—

"Them gals of Mrs. Skinner's was over this afternoon. They want to take Willie and Agnes to the treat at Betterleigh. I don't know, I'm sure. They only went to one a week come Friday. What be your moind about it, Ben?"

"Eh?" answered her husband. He was not listening very attentively. As a matter of fact, he was cogitating the attractions of a glass of ale and a chat with old Sam Bannerman at the Bunch of Grapes. It was Saturday evening, and old Sam would be there, and probably Sid Potton and Johnny Curtis. The conversation would be worth while. They would talk about the land and the weather, and dogs, and tobacco, and ratting, and other manly subjects.

He blew down his pipe and said, very slowly:—

"Oh! I doan't know. Might be all roight."

His wife added something about the frocks the Skinner girls were wearing, and after a few minutes Ben stood up and stretched himself. He walked to the cottage door and took down his cloth cap.

"O-er," he drawled, "I remember I must take that insurance money over to Carter's at Tringham."

"Don't be late, Ben," his wife called out as he raised the latch.

"Oo-ay!"

It was a fine, calm night as he ambled down the village street. He felt a quiet glow of contentment pervade him. A hard day's work in the open air, a good meal, and then the prospect of a glass of ale and a pipe, mellowed with an interesting talk about ratting—what more could any reasonable man demand?

He passed the time of night with several acquaintances, and was just turning the corner that led to the Bunch of Grapes when he ran right into an individual who started at the sight of him and gripped his arm, at the same time remarking:—

"I was looking for you."

It took Ben some seconds to recognize this gentleman in the fur coat; and then he realized that it was his employer's secretary. He had no great love for his employer. His name was Ephraim Pendlebury-Leyfus. He had inherited an enormous fortune from his father, who had made it out of some patent medicine. Mr. and Mrs. Pendlebury-Leyfus were newfangled, bumptious upstarts of people who were always driving about in motor-cars, and took no interest in gardening. Fortunately for Ben, he never came in contact with them. They paid him well and appointed him head-gardener, and he had three assistants. He was allowed to do as he liked. It was a large and well-appointed estate. Neither had he much regard for the secretary, Mr. Smythe, a fussy, overdressed, patent-leather-booty person, but still—one had to be polite. He said:—

"Good evenin', Mr. Smythe!"

And then he observed for the first time that Mr. Smythe was in a state of frenzied agitation. His lips were quivering, and the

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pupils of his eyes were dilated. He said, breathlessly :—

"Come. Get into this car. Mr. Pendlebury-Leyfus wants to see you at once."

"Wants to see I! At this toime o' noight!"

The delicately-planned scheme of his vegetable beds flashed through his mind. What can a gardener do in the dark, on a Saturday night of all nights?

But the other seemed in no mood for explanations. He gasped something about being quick.

It was very important. A large car was panting against the hedge just down the road. The lights of the Bunch of Grapes winked at him enticingly.

"Well, I doan't know," he said. "I doan't reckon to——"

But he found himself being bustled along. He got reluctantly into the car and the door snapped to. The secretary wound the thing up and jumped into the front seat, and they were off.

It was barely a mile to Cottersley Park, where the Pendlebury-Leyfuses lived, and the drive could not have occupied five minutes, but it gave Ben an opportunity for reflection. It was a closed car, so he could not converse with the secretary. Having dismissed the gardening idea, he wondered whether it was anything to do with his pay. But no, he had only been paid that morning. Had something been stolen and they were going to accuse him? Perhaps Mr. P.-L. wanted him to go to Scotland, where he had another large estate? He had once mentioned the subject. But Ben had no intention of falling in with any wild ideas like that. Born and bred in Cambridgeshire, and he meant to die there.

The car swung through the lodge gates, up the avenue of elms, then took a broad circular sweep and came to a stop by the front door. It had given him very little time for thinking, but coming up the drive he remembered that yesterday there had arrived a party of dark-skinned people, tremendous swells he understood. One was a kind of emperor of a foreign country. There had been a great to-do. The Pendlebury-Leyfuses loved to entertain anyone like that. But still they would be hardly likely to want to see the gardener. Eating and drinking was more their mark.

He found himself ushered into the oak-panelled library, where a fire was glowing in the grate. As he crossed the hall he had heard the hum of conversation and the chink of glass in the dining-room.

"Everything seems all right," he thought.

In less than two minutes the door opened and Mr. and Mrs. Pendlebury-Leyfus both entered. They were in evening dress, and he observed the same air of feverish anxiety about them which had characterized Mr. Smythe. Mrs. Pendlebury-Leyfus was so agitated that she shook hands with him, and her husband said :—

"Sit down, Tilbury."

He darted about the room as though he were looking for something. Then he came to a halt by the fireplace, and his wife sank back into an easy chair and sniffed at a bottle of smelling-salts. She was a large, florid woman, dressed in pink. Diamonds glittered from unexpected portions of her anatomy. She kept swaying backwards and forwards, the jewels on her fingers flashing as she waved the bottle of scent in front of her heavily-powdered face.

"You're a painted-up-looking cow!" thought Ben, but out loud he said :—

"What might you be wantin' me for, sir?"

Mr. Pendlebury-Leyfus stretched his legs wide apart and looked down at his white waistcoat. Then he coughed and cleared his throat.

"We've had a terrible upset here, Tilbury, and we want you to help us out of it."

Having said this, he looked at his wife as though for encouragement. The lady still being occupied with the scent-bottle, he came boldly to the point. He said :—

"We want you to dig a grave at once at the bottom of the vegetable garden."

"What!"

It was almost a shout which escaped the head-gardener. Mr. Pendlebury-Leyfus held up his hand.

"Pray be calm," he said. "I will explain it all to you. We have had the honour of a visit from His Highness the Ameer of Barochistan and his suite. Unfortunately, last night there was a deplorable—er—accident. His Highness comes from a country which, as you may imagine, has a rather different moral code to ours. Things are quite different. He is all-powerful, an autocrat. It appears that last night one of his servants angered him by some carelessness, and in a misguided moment His Highness struck the servant with a metal pipe. Unfortunately, the servant died . . . do you understand?"

Ben was on his feet, his cloth cap gripped firmly in his hand.

"Look-ee here, Mr. Leyfus," he proclaimed, in a stentorian voice, "I'll have nowt to do wi' this. I'm a gardener. I'll do a honest day's work with any man on the country-side, but you won't get me assistin' of a lot of black people to murder each other."

Mr. Pendlebury-Leyfus frowned and twirled his small waxed moustache. Then he spoke like a father addressing a small child.

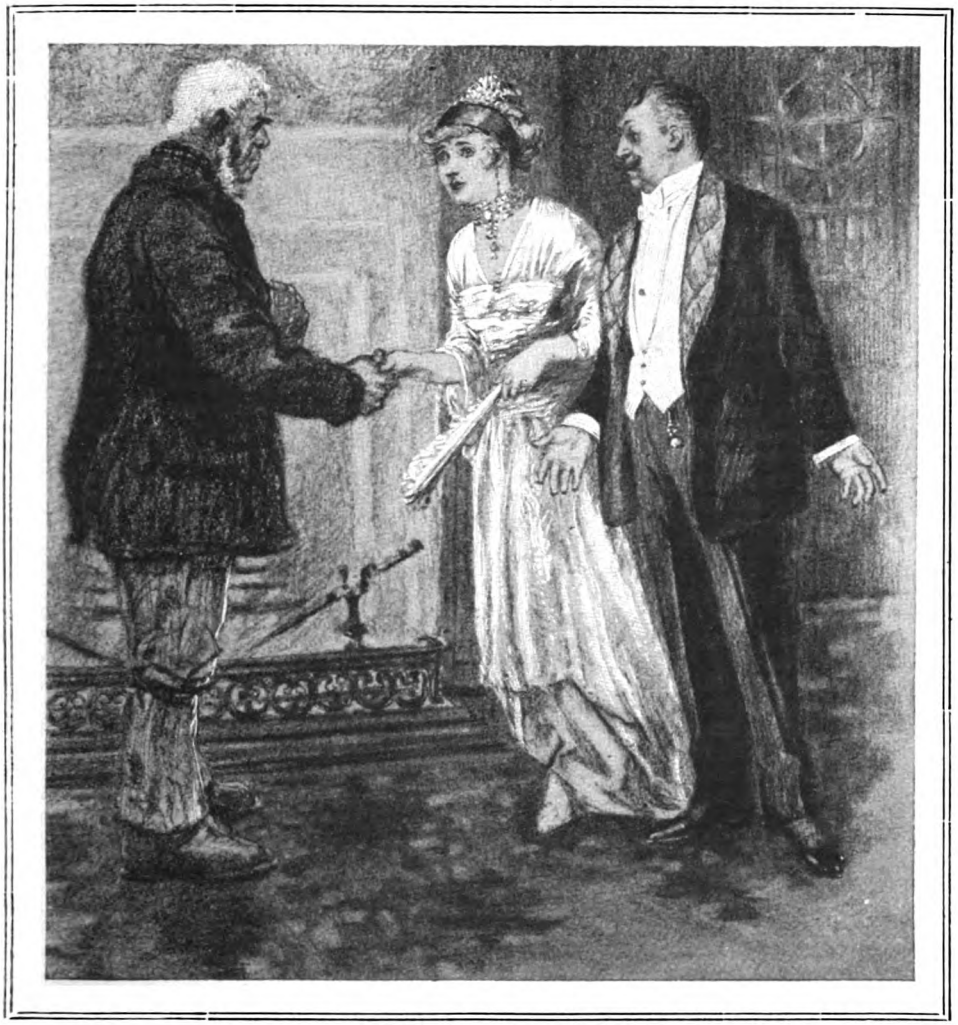
"That isn't exactly the position, Tilbury. It's much more involved than that. You see, in his own country it isn't a crime. There would be no question of that."

"Murderin' is murderin', wherever it's done!"

"It was in any case only an accident, a most unfortunate accident. And the public scandal must not be faced. You can have no idea what the political results might be. Barochistan is a very important and powerful State on the borders of India. If His Highness were to be involved and disgraced in our courts it might lead to war. Think of this, Tilbury; by doing as you are asked, by just digging this grave, you may save England from war!"

"Only a little one. It needn't be very deep," said Mrs. Pendlebury-Leyfus, who spoke for the first time.

"I tell 'ee I'll have nowt to do wi't. It's



"MRS. PENDLEBURY-LEYFUS WAS SO AGITATED THAT SHE SHOOK HANDS WITH HIM, AND HER HUSBAND SAID: 'SIT DOWN, TILBURY.'"

most irregler. It's a case for the police. But if they want to hush it up they must do their own buryin'. It's not my place. I'm a God-fearin' man."

"The reason we have called on you is obvious. The dug-up soil of the vegetable garden is the most suitable and least likely to attract notice. But if our friends had done it themselves it is more than probable that you or your assistants would have quickly discovered it. It is important for you to select a likely spot and to arrange matters so that none of the gardeners have occasion to dig anywhere near it in the future. You must cover the spot with tomato frames or something. If you will do this I will give you fifty pounds, and raise your salary another fifty pounds a year."

Mr. Pendlebury-Leyfus said this very clearly and deliberately, and his wife leant forward, flashing her large rings, almost as though she were about to tear them off her fingers and hand them to him.

Ben stood there gripping his cap. The horrid little visions of what could be done with fifty pounds danced before his eyes. But he managed to thrust them back. He turned round and spat in the fire. Then he pulled himself up and repeated:—

"No. I'll have nowt to do wi't."

"Oh, Mr. Tilbury," pleaded the lady. "Think of your country!"

Ben shrugged his shoulders, and Mr. Pendlebury-Leyfus said, sharply:—

"Very well, then. We must go and report the matter to the Ameer."

He walked to the door, and the three of them trooped out into the hall.

It was a vast hall with crowds of doors and

recesses and old furniture. Ben was anxious to find the way out, but a little uncertain of his sense of direction. He found himself by the open door of the dining-room, and his host said :—

"Just a moment, Tilbury. Come in."

It was very difficult to avoid doing so. He peered into the room. A large mahogany table gleamed under the diffused light of several standard lamps. There were silver bowls of fruit, nuts, and sweets, decanters of wine, and diminutive glasses filled with some bright green liquid. The secretary stood fidgeting by the fireplace. Three dusky gentlemen, one in evening dress, the other two in turbans and curious coloured wrappings, were seated round the table sipping their wine and talking in low voices. Mr. Pendlebury-Leyfus walked in and said :—

"Gentlemen, this is my gardener I spoke of. He refuses to do what we ask."

Ben stood just inside the door. The three Orientals stood up and bowed very solemnly. The one in evening dress immediately whispered to the other two in some queer lingo. He was apparently the interpreter. It was easy for Ben to decide which was the Ameer. He was the biggest of the three. He had a fat, puffy face and a bright green turban with a star in the centre.

"He looks a disagreeable-lookin' swine," thought Ben. "Just the sort to murder a servant and then hush it up."

The interpreter was a thin, cadaverous-looking individual. He rubbed his hands together in a cringing sort of way as he talked to the Ameer. Then he nodded several times and, leaning with one hand on the table, he said, in a smooth, staccato voice :—

"His Highness say if the man-gardener do his bidding he give him a lakh of rupees and the order of the Three Flamingos."

"Oh!" exclaimed Mr. Pendlebury-Leyfus. "Do you hear that, Tilbury? He'll give you a lakh of rupees. A fortune! An absolute fortune!"

Then he bobbed three times very quickly in the direction of the Ameer and muttered :—

"Very kind! Very kind indeed, I'm sure."

Ben sturdily shook his head at the room.

"No-a!" he said. "I wo-an't do it."

The interpreter was biting his nails, and whispering again to the Ameer. Ben turned and said :—

"And now I'll be gettin' back."

The interpreter exclaimed in a high-pitched voice :—

"Wait, wait! Let us discuss some more. Will not the man occupy himself with some little refreshment while we further consider what may be done?"

Ben thought of the good beer waiting him at the Bunch of Grapes. The sight of these foreign drinks nauseated him. Besides, who would trust this crowd? How could he know that the drink was not doped? Nevertheless, a bright idea occurred to him. He stepped up to the table and took an apple.

"Thanks!" he said. "I'll munch this along the road."

Then he turned his back on the room and faced Mr. Pendlebury-Leyfus standing by the door.

"I'm surprised at you, sir," he said. "I thowt I was workin' for a gen'leman. I'm goin' now, and I'd like to know what's to prevent me lodging a information about these goin's on to the police?"

He looked at the little beady eyes of his employer, and then became aware of a strange contraction in them. They were looking past him. At the same time a voice at his back said :—

"Only this!"

He turned sharply. Three paces from him stood the oleaginous Mr. Smythe, covering him with a horrid glittering little barrel. The room danced before his eyes. He was conscious of a great confusion of sounds and feelings. Mrs. Pendlebury-Leyfus screamed. The Orientals were whispering excitedly together. Someone at the back was talking at the same time. It was some time after the event that he recollected that during this curious strained confusion the voice of Mrs. Pendlebury-Leyfus said once quite clearly :—

"Do be careful. It's so difficult to get a gardener!"

The whole thing was now on a different plane. It was one thing to be a man, to stick up for one's rights, to do what one thought was honest; but quite another thing to throw away one's life when there were those others depending on one. The vision of the cottage flashed before his mind. His wife quietly stitching, Mildred cutting out a skirt on the floor, the two young ones asleep upstairs; their rooms, their furniture, the bit of garden, the sweet air of the fields and lanes, the smell of shag, all the pleasant associations of a satisfying life. Mr. Smythe was saying :—

"Don't you be great fool, Tilbury. It's got to be done, and you've got to do it, and moreover you've got to keep it quiet. You've got the choice of a large fortune and an increase in salary, or alternatively—we'll be digging a grave for two!"

After all, he hadn't actually got to murder anyone himself. If the poor fellow had been done in, well, there it was! Someone had got to bury him. And, of course, a black man wasn't like a nice clean Christian. It was an affair all among themselves. All he had to do was to dig. But what about the servants? He would surely be detected!

Some of these apprehensions were probably apparent on his face, for Mr. Pendlebury-Leyfus said, quite affably :—

"There, there, Tilbury, that's right! Do not let it worry you. His Highness and suite occupy the Trianon wing on the ground floor beyond the conservatory. None of our servants have access to it while His Highness is there. From the door on the east side you are immediately among the thick shrubs which lead all the way to the vegetable garden. The night is fairly dark. I have sent Torkins and Peel downstairs to prepare the billiard-table. Don't forget to be careful about the spot you choose, so that you will know how to cover up your tracks later on.

Mr. Smythe and one of His Highness's representatives will accompany you."

Ben stood dubiously by the door twirling his cap.

"It's a nice thing, I must say!" he grumbled.

The Eastern gentlemen were still talking with great volubility. At length the interpreter said:—

"It is well. His Eminence Khan Shuan will accompany the man-gardener."

Ben didn't like it at all, but he walked surlily out into the hall. Two pocket-torches were produced, and the party started. His Eminence Khan Shuan and Mr. Smythe tip-toed across the hall, but the hob-nailed boots of Ben seemed to make a deafening noise on the marble tiles. They entered the long conservatory, dimly lighted, and then went silently through the door at the end into a corridor which was the artery of the Trianon wing. It was very dark there, and there was a faint perfume of some exotic scent. Ben thought he heard someone moving in the rooms. His heart beat quickly. He felt almost friendly towards Mr. Smythe, who walked behind him with a loaded revolver. He was in any case a white blackguard. But these dark-skinned swine! They might do anything. He wouldn't trust them at the end of a yard rope. Good Lord! In one of these rooms was one of them lying murdered!

They kicked against the door at the end, and slipped the bolt.

"Now, quiet!" whispered Mr. Smythe, huskily.

That was all that was said. They groped their way along the shrubs, Ben going first and the secretary close on his heels, the Oriental silently bringing up the rear. They reached the tool-shed and Ben got out his spade.

And then a curious itchy feeling came to him. A spade was a very useful implement. A man could do a lot with a spade. A sudden biff and down would go the armed brigand. Ben felt capable of coping with the Oriental alone. But then—well, in that case he would probably be a murderer himself! Moreover, Mr. Smythe seemed to have some prevision of this hidden potentiality. He kept well clear. He covered Ben with the torch from a distance of six or seven yards; a comfortable distance to fire, but too far to do really useful spade-work. Also the Oriental swell had an unfortunate habit of hovering all over the place. You could never be quite certain where he was.

Ben selected the spot. It was just beyond the vegetable marrows. The soil was very loose and there was a great pile of manure handy with which he would be able to temporarily cover up the effect of his operations. He marked it out and then began to dig. And he dug, and dug, and dug! By nature, being a good gardener, he had acquired the genius of doing everything very slowly, but on this occasion he dug like a madman. He made up his mind that he could not escape his fate, so he decided to get through it as quickly as possible.

In half an hour he had dug quite a nice grave. Not very deep and not very trim at the edges, but still a useful, workmanlike job. The manure would cover up the minor deficiencies. Now and then he would rest for half a minute and spit on his hands. Mr. Smythe was hovering restlessly a few yards away, but His Excellency Khan Shuan remained absolutely inert and impassive, holding a torch to reveal the gardener's handiwork. When it was finished Ben was perspiring freely. He mopped his brow and said:—

"Well, that's done, and now I'll be off!"

"Oh, no!" sharply replied Mr. Smythe. "You must come back, and we must all report the result. They may require you further."

"I'm danged if I'm goin' to have anythin' to do with the buryin'," quoth the gardener.

Khan Shuan made gestures with his hands, as though he suspected Ben's intentions, and was prepared to thwart them. Mr. Smythe nodded, implying that he had the matter well in hand. He said:—

"That's all right, your Excellency. He'll do what he's told!"

The little revolver once more came vividly to the fore.

"By gosh!" thought Ben. "You wait till I get you alone, you smug worm!"

"Leave the spade and go ahead!" ordered the man with the revolver.

Ben growled and did as he was told.

They groped their way back through the shrubs and regained the corridor. It seemed darker and more unpleasant than ever. Khan Shuan made signs to the other two to wait. He then vanished through one of the doors. Ben thought he heard a sound of low wailing or chanting. Doubtless some of their ridiculous monkey-tricks performed in honour of the dead. There was a distinct smell of incense. Khan Shuan kept them waiting nearly five minutes. At last he reappeared, and noiselessly lead the way back to the white quarters. When they regained the main hall there was a sound of singing. They found the rest of the party in the French drawing-room. A large gramophone was emitting the vibrato of some fruity Italian tenor. This was obviously done for the benefit of the servants. To give an air of normality.

The Ameer was seated in a large gilt chair with his hands crossed over his protruding front. He was just staring at the gramophone with no expression on his face at all. The interpreter was leaning forward nervously playing with his fingers. Mr. Pendlebury-Leyfus was standing pompously leaning against the grand piano like a showman. Mrs. Pendlebury-Leyfus was lying back in an upholstered chair fanning herself, as though entertaining foreign potentates were the most usual experience of her life.

"H'm! they're a merry-lookin' bunch!" thought Ben. "Give me the bar-parlour of the Bunch of Grapes any day in the week!"

They all started as the trio entered the room. Mr. Pendlebury-Leyfus walked quickly across and shut the door.

"Don't turn off the gramophone," he said. "Let's talk round the fire."

The Ameer didn't stir. But the others gathered by the fireplace.

"It's all ready," said Mr. Smythe.

"IT WAS EASY FOR BEN TO DECIDE WHICH WAS THE AMEER. HE WAS THE BIGGEST OF THE CENTRE. 'HE LOOKS A DISAGREEABLE-LOOKIN' SWINE,' THOUGHT

"Well, then, you had better go and—put it in, you three," replied Mr. Pendlebury-Leyfus.

"I'll have nowt to do with buryin'," growled Ben.

No one took any notice of him. The interpreter seemed nervous. He asked one or two questions in English, and one or two in "Barochistan," or whatever the language was. Khan Shuan appeared to be very emphatic about something. They went and reported matters to the Ameer. The doleful potentate nodded slowly, and after some time he raised his right hand and whispered in the interpreter's ear. There was more talk, and then the interpreter returned to the hearth-rug. He bowed jerkily and said :—

"Sir and Lady, His Highness has spoken. This is a delicate matter which concerns the Ho-Bidyeh Soh-Kranto faith. If you will kindly permit, we will retire and in quite soon a little while report the dictates of The Master."

"Yes, yes, of course! Charmed," replied Mr. Pendlebury-Leyfus, bowing.

The Barochistan party retired ceremoniously. When they had gone the watchful Mr. Smythe hovered by the door. Mr. Pendlebury-Leyfus walked up and down the room with his hands behind his back. Ben, who was becoming

THE THREE. HE HAD A FAT, PUFFY FACE AND A BRIGHT GREEN TURBAN WITH A STAR IN BEN. 'JUST THE SORT TO MURDER A SERVANT AND THEN HUSH IT UP.'"

indifferent to this social atmosphere, and somewhat desperate at the confinement, threw himself negligently into the large settee facing the fire, and crossed his legs. Mrs. Pendlebury-Leyfus was in the easy chair at right angles to Ben. He stared at her, and he noticed that her eyes were fascinated by his boots. She could not look at anything else. The gramophone was still screaming forth excerpts from Leoncavallo, and suddenly Mrs. Pendlebury-Leyfus burst out crying. She dabbed her eyes, and sniffed. Her husband turned and patted her shoulder.

"Come, come!" he said. "What is it, my dear?"

"It's a nice thing you've let us in for," she cried, hysterically, "asking all these black people here. And then they go murdering their servants and make all this upset! And we have to put up with it, and have the gardener's hob-nailed boots in the drawing-room and all that!"

"But I'd like to know," replied Mr. Pendlebury-Leyfus, irritably, "who it was who insisted on having them asked? When the introduction came, who sent off the telegram almost at once? Who sent the announcement about the visit to the *Morning Post?*"

"I—I never wanted them to come!"

"Well, for God's sake don't carry on now.

We've got to see it through. They'll be back soon, and if they see you crying it will put the lid on it."

"I wish they'd go! The dirty black scum!"

The storm lasted some time, and the lady never took her eyes from Ben's boots, except to cry. The gardener felt quite convinced that the presence of his boots annoyed her much more than the murder of the servant. And he felt pleased about this. He stuck them out and dangled one insultingly across his knee.

It must have been about twenty minutes before the guests returned, and when they did it was patent that some important decision had been arrived at. They all looked more solemn and ceremonious than ever. Khan Shuan and the interpreter ushered the Ameer to his former seat, where he sat impassively staring at the gramophone, which had now left off. They then bowed very low to him, and then to each other. Khan Shuan took a seat a few yards away by the side of the Ameer, and the interpreter remained standing. He again bowed to Mr. and Mrs. Pendlebury-Leyfus, and crossed his arms. Then, speaking very slowly and distinctly, he said:—

"Honoured sir and lady, His Highness has consulted with the inner circle of Fuhan-Shi. It is all now plainly written how in the circumstances one should act. The servant of His Highness who met with the regrettable accident was a low menial of the seventh grade of Kâli-Tsor. Nevertheless, he was a true believer and follower of Soh-Kranto faith. And it is written that none must touch the body of a disciple of The Master without being himself a follower of one who has been initiated into the mysteries of the Ho-Bidyeh."

"Quite so! Quite so!" jerked out Mr. Pendlebury-Leyfus. "You mean that your people must bury him themselves, eh?"

"Not so," replied the interpreter. "Or only partly so. The position of His Highness, and of His Eminence Khan Shuan, preclude them from fulfilling this office. Even I, unworthy as I am, am of the second grade of a Kâli-Tsor. There remains, therefore, among His Highness's personnel only the serving-man Ku Tan."

"Ah! Oh, yes, quite so! What do you propose to do, then?"

"It will be necessary to initiate the man-gardener into the mysteries of the Ho-Bidyeh!"

"No! I'm danged if I do!" roared Ben, and he pushed past the interpreter and made for the door. "I doan't want to know nothin' about the blamed mysteries!"

The disgusting Mr. Smythe stood guarding the door, and the sight of him infuriated Ben beyond endurance.

"You!" he cried out. "You shoot and be blistered!"

He took a step forward to his inevitable destruction, when suddenly he found himself gripped from behind. He caught sight of a pair of long black hands clutching his chest. Ben, though not so young as he once was, put up a sturdy fight.

"They mean to kill me," he thought, and determined that they should pay the full price for it. His arms, legs, mouth, and bullet head were all brought into violent play. But they were strong, these Orientals, and they seemed to know something about this kind of game. One of them gripped him low round the ankles. Another whipped a silk handkerchief across his mouth. His arms were locked in some tricky fashion. He was bound up like a fly in a spider's web. The struggle was over in three or four minutes. Mrs. Pendlebury-Leyfus started to scream, and her husband yelled out:—

"Don't scream, you fool!"

Ben's eyes were also bandaged, but he could hear Mr. Pendlebury-Leyfus calling out to him, nervously:—

"It's all right, Tilbury! It's only a matter of form! They won't hurt you if you do what they tell you!"

He wanted to yell out "Form be blowed!" but the bandage prevented him from doing anything more than growl. He felt himself lifted up and carried out of the room. They crossed the hall and entered the corridor of the Eastern quarter. It seemed a long way, much farther than when he had walked it just previously.

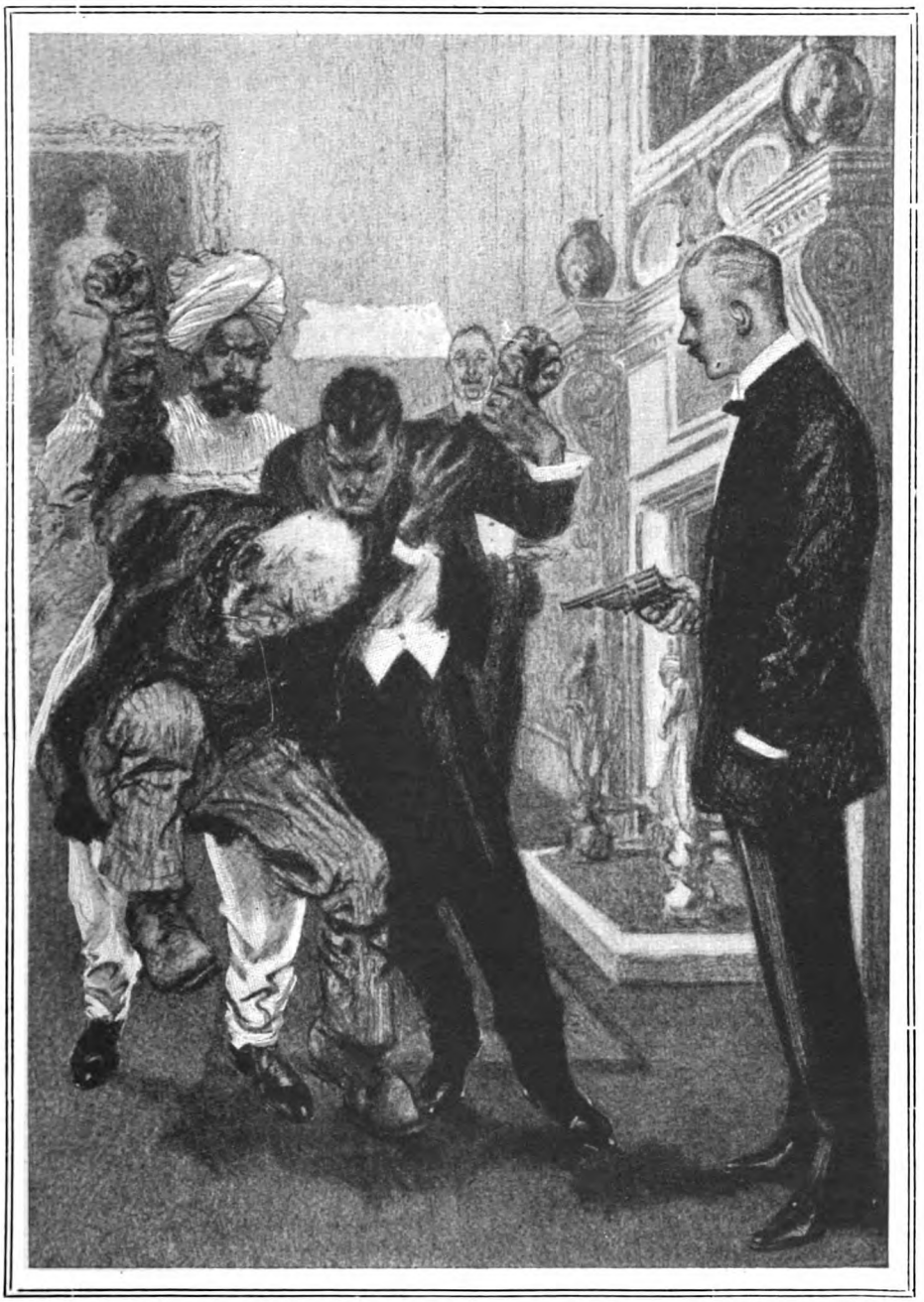
"They mean to bury me in that grave!" he kept thinking. He did not struggle. He was husbanding his strength for the last great fight. Suddenly the procession stopped. Evidently Mr. Smythe was still there, for he heard the interpreter say:—

"Honoured sir, it will not be necessary for us to further detain you. The room consecrated for the time being to the Holy Faith may be entered only by the followers of Soh-Kranto, and those about to be initiated into the mysteries of the Ho-Bidyeh."

Mr. Smythe muttered something and apparently departed. They went through another door and Ben heard it snap to behind them. He was alone—alone with these heathens and believers in the black arts. He would have given anything to have retained Mr. Smythe and his sociable little pistol. Alone in a dark and forbidding world. If he was to die, might he die quickly and directly. He had heard terrible stories of these black foreigners—stories of tortures and lingering agonies.

He was placed in an upright chair with his hands tied behind. He heard whispering going on, and very faintly the clang of some queer musical instrument. His nose, his only fully active organ, was keenly alive to the penetrating incense. Then hands lightly flicked his head. He felt his eye-bandage being removed. It came away and he blinked at the full light. For some seconds he could visualize nothing, and then suddenly an object directly opposite him took shape, and he wanted to cry out with horror!

Against the dark window curtain was a low couch, and on it was a body covered with a white sheet. It was the murdered man! This was the beginning of their disgusting ceremony! In the corner of the room was a dark figure playing on some metallic toneless instrument. The Ameer himself was walking to and fro and making peculiar passes in the direction of the



"BEN, THOUGH NOT SO YOUNG AS HE ONCE WAS, PUT UP A STURDY FIGHT. HIS ARMS, LEGS, MOUTH, AND BULLET-HEAD WERE ALL BROUGHT INTO VIOLENT PLAY."

corpse. Behind him was the man who had removed his bandage.

Ben felt the veins in his temples swelling. He wanted to shout, but he felt too nerveless even to struggle. He had no idea how long he sat there transfixed before the amazing climax came upon him. He could not detach what was real from what was the tissue of his imagination. He remained for a long time both before and after the climax in a state of immovability. The truth did not get through to him. Was it the heat of the room? The peculiar effect of the incense? The weird chanting? Or some more malevolent narcotic? But as he saw it the whole

situation become inexplicably metamorphosed. The corpse suddenly sat up and pushed back the sheet and appeared to be a young man in a grey suit and a fresh complexion, who said :—

"I say, confound it, you chaps! I'm fed up with this!"

And the Ameer behaved in a most peculiar way. His heavy mournful face suddenly seemed to expand into a broad, fat, jovial grin. And then he threw back his head and laughed. And the interpreter and His Eminence Khan Shuan seemed to be punching each other in the ribs, while the revivified corpse was exclaiming :—

"Don't make such a bally row! They'll hear!"

But of course all this couldn't be true. It was some mad dream. The other thing was true—the murdered servant, the mystic rites. It couldn't be true that the dignified Khan Shuan was digging *him* in the ribs and calling him "a priceless old thing!" But it certainly seemed to be true that someone was unbinding his hands and feet. He shook himself free, still staring incredibly at his captors. There was a lot of talk and noise, and his slow-moving brain had not yet grasped the significance of it. But after a time the interpreter took a chair and sat on the back of it, and said :—

"Let's see, old thing, what's your name?"

"Ben Tilbury."

"Ah! Ben, allow me to introduce you to Micky O'Burn from Jesus."

The Ameer came forward and gripped his hand; and, speaking in a slight Irish brogue, he said :—

"Ben, ye're a rare old sportsman!"

Khan Shuan was introduced as Tiny Winkleson, the young man in the grey suit as Monty, and the interpreter announced himself as James Mulberry Trimmingham.

"Now that's all square," he added. "We're sorry to have led you up the garden in every sense, but you see what it is? We've all come over from Jesus just to put it across these bally snobs, the Pendlebury-Leyfuses. They're the talk of the county. But Monty has got to get away to-night. He's playing in a golf tournament to-morrow. But as he arrived with us and they probably counted us we thought the best way to get rid of him was to bury him in the garden. It will also be a pretty little memento for our host. We've got to stay on till Monday. There's a bet on that we don't get detected. Now look here, Ben, have you got anything you can shove in that grave?"

Ben was still eminently solemn. He had not had time to adjust his vision to this violent perspective. He scratched his chin and thought. At last he said :—

"Why, yes! At the back of shed just up agin the stone wall afore you comes to the ricks is a litter of dead rats. Mr. Gateshead put down p'ison o' Toosday. I been meanin' to bury they."

"Capital!" exclaimed the interpreter, and the Ameer cut in with :—

"Sure, that's foine; and, look here, Ben, you've to take that extra fifty quid. And if any time this blackguard of an employer tries to come it over ye, just point over here to the vegetable garden and whisper 'rats'!"

They all laughed and clapped him on the back, and the young man named Monty slipped on a dark overcoat and a felt hat.

"Now," he said, "come on, Ben, we'll step out together. And you chaps keep the tom-tom stunt going while we perform the holy rites. I've just got time to catch the 10.17."

The other three shook Ben's hand, and the Ameer said :—

"You needn't come back, Ben. I'll make your apologies and explain that we've sent you back to your home under a spell of the Oke-pōke, or something. We'll say ye're a real hot Sohkrantic, and don't you forget to work the rats for all you're worth."

Ben shook hands solemnly, but after further discussion Khan Shuan and the interpreter also came as far as the grave and helped intern the rats, leaving the Ameer in all his glory to play the tom-tom on a biscuit tin. The task was accomplished in comparative silence. When it was finished and the pile of manure distributed over the mound, the conspirators again shook hands with Ben, and he walked slowly off, making his way out of the park by the east gate. He trudged slowly along, swinging his long arms. After a time he took the apple out of his pocket and munched it thoughtfully. He got into the lane by Purvey's meadow and crossed the high road. The night was still fine and calm. It was just as he was passing the copse by the outskirts of Walley's Farm, which as you know is barely a quarter of a mile from the village church, that he suddenly stopped and threw the apple-core into the hedge. Then he slapped his leg, and uttered a low "Haw, haw, haw." Then he gathered breath and repeated the operation in a louder key. He must have stood three or four minutes. He was unable to go on. His "Haw, haw, haws" reached to heaven. A car passing along the high-road heard it, and someone remarked about "these disgusting villagers—always drunk!"

The tears ran down his cheeks and his body shook, and still he laughed. At length he took a large red handkerchief and cleaned himself up. He lighted his pipe, and his face again resumed its solemn repose.

It was exactly 10.35 when he entered the cottage. Mildred had gone to bed and his wife was just preparing to do so. She said :—

"Halloa, Ben, you're a bit late. What's it like out?"

"Oh, middlin'!"

He hung his cloth cap up on the peg behind the door. Then he walked slowly to the fire and relighted his pipe from a red ember. His wife sat down and yawned. And Ben sat opposite her, and for several minutes there was silence. At length, looking along the bowl of his pipe, he said :—

"Let's see, what was you sayin' about them Skinner gals?"

HER FREEDOM

by

ETHEL M. DELL

Illustrated by Kay Edmunds

The following, which is one of Ethel M. Dell's charming love stories, appeared elsewhere many years ago, and is here reprinted for the benefit of the great number of readers to whom it will be new.

"WE have been requested to announce that the marriage arranged between Viscount Merrivale and Miss Hilary St. Orme will not take place."

Viscount Merrivale was eating his breakfast when he chanced upon this announcement. He was late that morning, and, contrary to custom, was skimming through the paper at the same time. But the paragraph brought both occupations to an abrupt standstill. He stared at the sheet for a few moments as if he thought it was bewitched. His brown face reddened, and he looked as if he were about to say something. Then he pushed the paper aside with a contemptuous movement and drank his coffee.

His servant, appearing in answer to the bell a few minutes later, looked at him with furtive curiosity. He had already seen the announcement, being in the habit of studying society items before placing the paper on the breakfast-table. But Merrivale's clean-shaven face was free from perturbation, and the man was puzzled.

"Reynolds," Merrivale said, "I shall go out of town this afternoon. Have the motor ready at four."

"Very good, my lord." Reynolds glanced at the table and noted with some satisfaction that his master had only eaten one egg.

"Yes, I have finished," Merrivale said, taking up the paper. "If Mr. Culver calls, ask him to be good enough to wait for me. And—that's

"VISCOUNT MERRIVALE WAS EATING HIS BREAKFAST AND SKIMMING THROUGH THE PAPER AT THE SAME TIME. BUT THE PARAGRAPH BROUGHT BOTH OPERATIONS TO AN ABRUPT STANDSTILL."

all," he ended abruptly as he reached the door.

"As cool as a cucumber!" murmured Reynolds, as he began to clear the table. "I shouldn't wonder but what he stuck the notice in hisself."

Merrivale, still with the morning paper in his hand, strolled easily down to his club and collected a few letters. He then sauntered into the smoking-room, where a knot of men, busily conversing in undertones, gave him awkward greeting.

Merrivale lighted a cigar and sat down deliberately to study his paper.

Nearly an hour later he rose, nodded to several members, who glanced up at him expectantly, and serenely took his departure.

A general buzz of discussion followed.

"He doesn't look exactly heart-broken," one man observed.

"Hearts grow tough in the West," remarked another. "He has probably done the breaking-off himself. Jack Merrivale, late of California, isn't the sort of chap to stand much trifling."

A young man with quizzical eyes broke in with a laugh.

"Ask Mr. Cosmo Fletcher! He is really well up on that subject."

"Also Mr. Richard Culver, apparently," returned the first speaker.

Culver grinned and bowed.

"Certainly, sir," he said. "But—luckily for himself—he has never qualified for a leathering from Jack Merrivale, late of California. I don't believe myself that he did do the breaking-off. As they haven't met more than a dozen times, it can't have gone very deep with him. And, anyhow, I am certain the girl never cared twopence for anything except his title, the imp. She's my cousin, you know, so I can call her what I like—always have."

"I shouldn't abuse the privilege in Merrivale's presence if I were you," remarked the man who had expressed the opinion that Merrivale was not one to stand much trifling.

"Well, but wasn't it unreasonable?" said Hilary St Orme, with hands clasped daintily behind her dark head. "Who could stand such tyranny as that? And surely it's much better to find out before than after. I hate masterful men, Sybil. I am quite sure I could never have been happy with him."

The girl's young step-mother looked across at the pretty mutinous face and sighed.

"It wasn't a nice way of telling him so, I'm afraid, dear," she said. "Your father is very vexed."

"But it was beautifully conclusive, wasn't it?" laughed Hilary. "As to the poor old pater, he won't keep it up for ever, bless his simple heart, that did want its daughter to be a viscountess. So while the fit lasts I propose to judiciously absent my erring self. It's a nuisance to have to miss all the fun this season; but with the pater in the sulks it wouldn't be worth it. So I'm off to-morrow to join Bertie and the house-boat at Riverton. As Dick has taken a bungalow close by, we shall be quite a happy family party. They will be happy; I shall be happy; and you—positively, darling, you won't have a care left in the world. If it weren't for your matrimonial bonds, I should quite envy you."

"I don't think you ought to go down to Riverton without someone responsible to look after you," objected Mrs. St. Orme, dubiously.

"My dear little mother, what a notion!" cried her step-daughter, with a merry laugh. "Who ever dreamt of the proprieties on the river? Why, I spent a whole fortnight on the house-boat with only Bertie and the Badger that time the poor old pater and I fell out over—what was it? Well, it doesn't matter. Anyhow, I did. And no one a bit the worse. Bertie is equal to a dozen *duennas*, as everyone knows."

"Don't you really care, I wonder?" said Mrs. St. Orme, with wondering eyes on the animated face.

"Why should I, dear?" laughed the girl, dropping upon a hassock at her side. "I am my own mistress. I have a little money, and—considering I am only twenty-four—quite a lot of wisdom. As to being Viscountess Merrivale, I will say it fascinated me a little—just at first, you know. And the poor old pater was so respectful I couldn't help enjoying myself. But the gilt soon wore off the gingerbread, and I really couldn't enjoy what was left. I said to myself, 'My dear, that man has the makings of a hectoring bully. You must cut yourself loose at once if you don't want to develop into that most miserable of all creatures, a down-trodden wife.' So after our little tiff of the day before yesterday I sent the notice off forthwith. And—you observe—it has taken effect. The tyrant hasn't been near."

"You really mean to say the engagement wasn't actually broken off before you sent it?" said Mrs. St. Orme, looking shocked.

"It didn't occur to either of us," said Hilary, looking down with a smile at the corners of her mouth. "He chose to take exception to my being seen riding in the park with Mr. Fletcher. And I took exception to his interference. Not that I like Mr. Fletcher, for I don't. But I had to assert my right to choose my own friends. He disputed it. And then we parted. No one is going to interfere with my freedom."

"You were never truly in love with him, then?" said Mrs. St. Orme, regret and relief struggling in her voice.

Hilary looked up with clear eyes.

"Oh, never, darling!" she said, tranquilly. "Nor he with me. I don't know what it means; do you? You can't—surely—be in love with the poor old pater?"

She laughed at the idea and idly took up a paper lying at hand. Half a minute later she uttered a sharp cry and looked up with flaming cheeks.

"How—how dare he?" she cried, almost incoherent with angry astonishment. "Sybil! For Heaven's sake! See!"

She thrust the paper upon her step-mother's knee and pointed with a finger that shook

uncontrollably at a brief announcement in the society column.

"We are requested to state that the announcement in yesterday's issue that the marriage arranged between Viscount Merrivale and Miss Hilary St. Orme would not take place was erroneous. The marriage will take place, as previously announced, towards the end of the season."

"What sublime assurance!" exclaimed Bertie St. Orme, lying on his back in the luxurious punt which his sister was leisurely impelling up-stream, and laughing up at her flushed face. "This viscount of yours seems to have plenty of decision of character, whatever else he may be lacking in."

Bertie St. Orme was a cripple, and spent every summer regularly upon the river with his old manservant, nicknamed "the Badger."

"Oh, he's quite impossible!" Hilary declared. "Let's talk of something else!"

"But he means to keep you to your word, eh?" her brother persisted. "How will you get out of it?"

Hilary's face flushed more deeply, and she bit her lip.

"There won't be any getting out of it. Don't be silly! I am free."

"The end of the season!" teased Bertie. "That allows you—let's see—four, five, six more weeks of freedom."

"Be quiet, if you don't want a drenching!" warned Hilary. "Besides," she added, with inconsequent optimism, "anything may happen before then. Why, I may even be married to a man I really like."

"Great Scotland, so you may!" chuckled her brother. "There's the wild man that Dick has brought down here to tame before launching at society. He's a great beast like a brown bear. He wouldn't be my taste, but that's a detail."

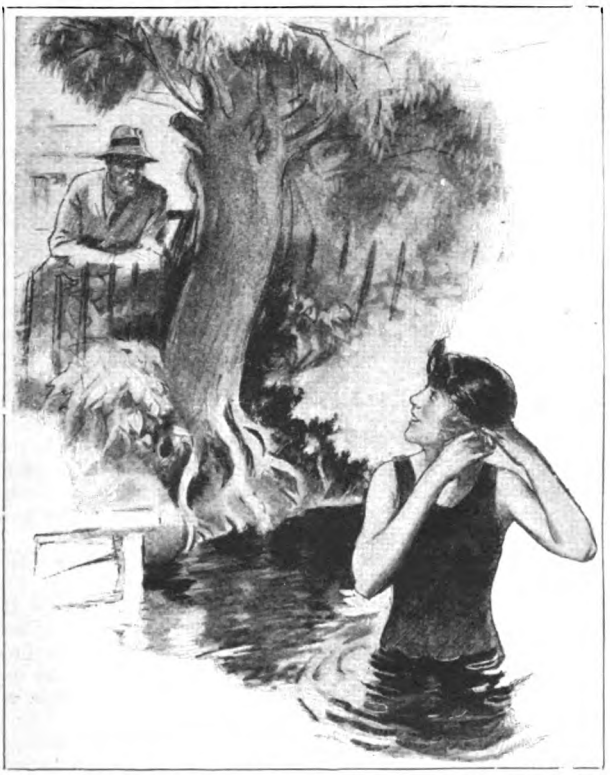
"I hate fashionable men!" declared Hilary, with scarlet face. "I'd rather marry a Red Indian than one of these inane men about town."

"Ho! ho!" laughed Bertie. "Then Dick's wild man will be quite to your taste. As soon as he leaves off worrying mutton-bones with his fingers and teeth, we'll ask Dick to bring him to dine."

"You're perfectly disgusting!" said Hilary, digging her punt-pole into the bed of the river with a vicious plunge. "If you don't mean to behave yourself, I won't stay with you."

"Oh, yes, you will," returned Bertie, with brotherly assurance. "You wouldn't miss Dick's aborigine for anything—and I don't blame you, for he's worth seeing. Dick assures me that he is quite harmless, or I don't know that I should care to venture my scalp at such close quarters."

"You're positively ridiculous to-day," Hilary declared.



"A WHIFF OF TOBACCO-SMOKE INTERRUPTED HER SOLILOQUY. SHE SHOOK BACK HER WET HAIR AND STOOD UP WAIST-DEEP IN THE CLEAR GREEN WATER."

A perfect summer morning, a rippling blue river that shone like glass where the willows dipped and trailed, and a girl who sang a murmurous little song to herself as she slid down the bank into the laughing stream.

Ah, it was heavenly! The sun-flecks on the water danced and swam all about her. The trees whispered to one another above her floating form. The roses on the garden balustrade of Dick Culver's bungalow nodded as though welcoming a friend. She turned over and struck out vigorously, swimming up-stream. It was June, and the whole world was awake and singing.

"It's better than the entire London season put together," she murmured to herself, as she presently came drifting back.

A whiff of tobacco-smoke interrupted her soliloquy. She shook back her wet hair and stood up waist-deep in the clear green water.

"What ho, Dick!" she called, gaily. "I can't see you, but I know you're there. Come down and have a swim, you lazy boy!"

There followed a pause. Then a diffident

voice with an unmistakably foreign accent made reply:—

"Were you speaking to me?"

Glancing up in the direction of the voice, Hilary discovered a stranger seated against the trunk of a willow on the high bank above her. She started and coloured. She had forgotten Dick's wild man. She described him later as the brownest man she had ever seen. His face was brown, the lower part of it covered with a thick growth of brown beard. His eyes were brown, surmounted by very bushy eyebrows. His hair was brown. His hands were brown. His clothes were brown, and he was smoking what looked like a brown clay pipe.

Hilary regained her self-possession almost at once. The diffidence of the voice gave her assurance.

"I thought my cousin was there," she explained. "You are Dick's friend, I think?"

The man on the bank smiled an affirmative, and Hilary remarked to herself that he had splendid teeth.

"I am Dick's friend," he said, speaking slowly, as if learning the lesson from her. There was a slight subdued twang in his utterance which attracted Hilary immensely.

She nodded encouragingly to him.

"I am Dick's cousin," she said. "He will tell you all about me if you ask him."

"I will certainly ask," the stranger said, in his soft foreign drawl.

"Don't forget!" called Hilary, as she splashed back into deep water. "And tell him to bring you to dine on our house-boat at eight to-night. Bertie and I will be delighted to see you. We were meaning to send a formal invitation. But no one stands on ceremony on the river—or in it either," she laughed to herself as she swam away with swift, even strokes.

"I shouldn't have asked him in that way," she explained to her brother afterwards, "if he hadn't been rather shy. One must be nice to foreigners, and dear Dickie's society undiluted would bore me to extinction."

"I don't think we had better give him a knife at dinner," remarked Bertie. "I shouldn't like you to be scalped, darling. It would ruin your prospects. I suppose my only course would be to insist upon his marrying you forthwith."

"Bertie, you're a beast!" said his sister, tersely.

"We have taken you at your word, you see," sang out Dick Culver from his punt. "I hope you haven't thought better of it by any chance, for my friend has been able to think of nothing else all day."

A slim white figure danced eagerly out of the tiny dining-saloon of the house-boat.

"Come on board!" she cried, hospitably. "The Badger will see to your punt. I am glad you're not late."

She held out her hand to the newcomer with a pretty lack of ceremony. He looked more than ever like a backwoodsman, but it was quite evident that he was pleased with his surroundings. He shook hands with her almost reverently, and smiled in a quiet, well-satisfied way. But, having nothing to say, he did not vex himself to put it into words—a trait which strongly appealed to Hilary.

"His name," said Dick Culver, laughing at his cousin over the big man's shoulder, "is Jacques. He has another, but, as nobody ever uses it, it isn't to the point, and I never was good at pronunciation. He is a French Canadian, with a dash of Yankee thrown in. He is of a peaceable disposition except when roused, when all his friends find it advisable to give him a wide berth. He——"

"That'll do, my dear fellow," softly interposed the stranger, with a gentle lift of the elbow in Culver's direction. "Leave Miss St. Orme to find out the rest for herself. I hope she is not easily alarmed."

"Not at all, I assure you," said Hilary. "Never mind Dick! No one does. Come inside!"

She led the way with light feet. Her exile from London during the season promised to be less deadly than she had anticipated. Unmistakably she liked Dick's wild man.

They found Bertie in the little rose-lit saloon, and as he welcomed the stranger Culver drew Hilary aside. There was much mystery on his comical face.

"I'll tell you a secret," he murmured; "this fellow is a great chief in his own country, but he doesn't want anyone to know it. He's coming here to learn a little of our ways, and he's particularly interested in English women, so be nice to him."

"I thought you said he was a French Canadian," said Hilary.

"That's what he wants to appear," said Culver. "And, anyhow, he had a Yankee mother. I know that for a fact. He's quite civilized, you know. You needn't be afraid of him."

"Afraid!" exclaimed Hilary.

Turning, she found the newcomer looking at her with brown eyes that were soft under the bushy brows.

"He can't be a Red Man," she said to herself. "He hasn't got the cheekbones."

Leaving Dick to amuse himself, she smiled upon her other guest with winning graciousness and forthwith began the dainty task of initiating him into the ways of English women.

She was relieved to find that, notwithstanding his hairy appearance, he was, as Dick had assured her, quite civilized. As the meal proceeded she suddenly conceived an interest in Canada and the States which had never before possessed her. She questioned him with growing eagerness, and he replied with a smile and always that half-reverent, half-shy courtliness that had first attracted her. Undoubtedly he was a pleasant companion. He clothed the information for which she asked in careful and picturesque language. He was ready at any moment to render any service, however slight, but his attentions were so unobtrusive that Hilary could not but accept them with pleasure. She maintained her pretty graciousness throughout dinner, anxious to set him at his ease.

"Englishmen are not half so nice," she said to herself, as she rose from the table. And she thought of the stubborn Viscount Merrivale as she said it.

There was a friendly regret at her departure written in the man's eyes as he opened the door for her, and with a sudden girlish impulse she paused.

"Why don't you come and smoke your cigar in the punt?" she said.

He glanced irresolutely over his shoulder at the other two men, who were discussing some political problem with much absorption.

With a curious desire to have her way with him, the girl waited with a little laugh.

"Come!" she said, softly. "You can't be interested in British politics."

He looked at her with his friendly, silent smile, and followed her out.

"Isn't it heavenly?" breathed Hilary, as she lay back on the velvet cushions and watched the man's strong figure bend to the punt-pole.

"I think it is Heaven, Miss St. Orme," he answered, in a hushed voice.

The sun had scarcely set in a cloudless shimmer of rose, and, sailing up from the east, a full moon cast a rippling silvery pathway upon the mysterious water.

The girl drew a long sigh of satisfaction, then laughed a little.

"What a shame to make you work after dinner!" she said.

She saw his smile in the moonlight.

"Do you call this work?" She seemed to hear a faint ring of amusement in the slowly-uttered question.

"You are very strong," she said, almost involuntarily.

"Yes," he agreed, quietly, and there suddenly ran a curious thrill through her—a feeling that she and he had once been kindred spirits together in another world.

She felt as if their intimacy had advanced by strides when she spoke again, and the sensation was one of a strange, quivering delight which the perfection of the June night seemed to wholly justify. Anyhow, it was not a moment for probing her inner self with searching questions. She turned a little and suffered her fingers to trail through the moonlit water.

"I wonder if you would tell me something?" she said, almost diffidently.

"If it lies in my power," he answered, courteously.

"You may think it rude," she suggested, with a most unusual attack of timidity. It had been her habit all her life to command rather than to request. But somehow the very courtesy with which this man treated her made her uncertain of herself.

"I shall not think anything so—impossible," he assured her, gently, and again she saw his smile.

"Well," she said, looking up at him intently, "will you—please—let me into your secret? I promise I won't tell. But do tell me who you are!"

There followed a silence, during which the man leaned a little on his pole, gazing downwards while he kept the punt motionless. The water babbled round them with a tinkling murmur that was like the laughter of fairy voices. They had passed beyond the region of house-boats and bungalows, and the night was very still.

At last the man spoke, and the girl gave a queer little motion of relief.

"I should like to tell you everything there is to know about me," he said, in his careful, foreign English. "But—will you forgive me?—I do not feel myself able to do so—yet. Some day I will answer your question gladly—I hope some day soon—if you are kind enough to continue to extend to me your interest and your friendship."

He looked down into Hilary's uplifted face with a queer wistfulness that struck unexpectedly straight to her heart. She felt suddenly that this man's past contained something of loss and disappointment of which he could not lightly speak to a mere casual acquaintance.

With the quickness of impulse characteristic of her, she smiled sympathetic comprehension.

"And you won't even tell me your name?" she said.

He bent again to the pole, and she saw his teeth shine in the moonlight. "I think my friend told you one of my names," he said.

"Oh, it's much too commonplace," she protested. "Quite half the men I know are called Jack."

And then for the first time she heard him laugh—a low, exultant laugh that sent the blood in a sudden rush to her cheeks.

"Shall we go back now?" she suggested, turning her face away.

He obeyed her instantly, and the punt began to glide back through the ripples.

No further word passed between them till, as they neared the house-boat, the high, keen notes of a flute floated out upon the tender silence.

Hilary glanced up sharply, the moonlight on her face, and saw a group of men in a punt moored under the shadowy bank. One of them raised his hand and sent a ringing salutation across the water.

Hilary nodded and turned aside. There was annoyance on her face—the annoyance of one suddenly awakened from a dream of complete enjoyment.

Her companion asked no question. He was bending vigorously to his work. But she seemed to consider some explanation to be due to him.

"That," she said, "is a man I know slightly. His name is Cosmo Fletcher."

"A friend?" asked the big man.

Hilary coloured a little.

"Well," she said, half-reluctantly, "I suppose one would call him that."

"I believe you're in love with Culver's half-breed American," said Cosmo Fletcher, brutally, nearly three weeks later. He had just been rejected finally and emphatically by the girl who faced him in the stern of his skiff.

She was very pale, but her eyes were full of resolution as they met his.

"That," she said, "is no business of yours. Please take me back!"

He looked as if he would have liked to refuse, but her steadfast eyes compelled him. Sullenly he turned the boat.

Dead silence reigned between them till, as they rounded a bend in the river, and came within sight of the house-boat, Fletcher, glancing over his shoulder, caught sight of a big figure seated on the deck.

Then he turned to the girl with a sneer.

"It might interest Jack Merrivale to hear of this pretty little romance of yours," he said.

The colour flamed in her cheeks.

"Tell him then!" she said, defiantly.

"I think I must," said Fletcher. "He and I are such old friends."

He waited for her to tell him that it was on his account that they had quarrelled, but she would not so far gratify him, maintaining a stubborn silence till they drew alongside. Jacques rose to hand her on board.

"I hope you have enjoyed your row," he said, courteously.

"Thanks!" she returned, briefly, avoiding his eyes. "I think it is too hot to enjoy anything to-day."

The tea-kettle was singing merrily on the dainty brass spirit-lamp, and she sat down at the table forthwith.

Jacques stood beside her, silent and friendly as a tame mastiff. Perhaps his presence after what had just passed between herself and Fletcher made her nervous, or perhaps her thoughts were elsewhere and she forgot to be cautious. Whatever the cause, she took up the kettle carelessly, and knocked it against the spirit-lamp with some force.

Jacques swooped forward and steadied it before it could overturn; but the dodging flame caught the girl's muslin sleeve and set it ablaze in an instant. She uttered a cry and started up with a wild idea of flinging herself into the river, but Jacques was too quick for her. He turned and seized the burning fabric in his great hands, ripping it away from her arm and crushing out the flames with unflinching strength.

"Don't be frightened!" he said. "It's all right. I've got it out."

"And what of you?" she gasped, eyes of horror on his blackened hands.

He smiled at her reassuringly.

"Well done, man!" cried Dick Culver. "It was like you to save her life while we were thinking about it. Are you hurt, Hilary?"

"No," she said, with trembling lips. "But—but——"

She broke off on the verge of tears, and Dick considerately transferred his attention to his friend.

"Let's see the damage, old fellow."

"It is nothing," said Jacques, still faintly smiling. "Yes, you may see it if you like, if only to prove that I speak the truth."

He thrust out one hand and displayed a scorched and blistered palm.

"Call that nothing!" began Dick.

Fletcher suddenly pushed forward with an oath that startled them all.

"I should know that hand anywhere!" he exclaimed. "You infernal, lying impostor!"

There was an elaborate tattoo of the American flag on the extended wrist, to which he pointed with a furious laugh.

"Deny it if you can!" he said.

Jacques looked at him gravely, without the smallest sign of agitation.

"You certainly have good reason to know that hand rather well," he said, after a moment, speaking with extreme deliberation, "considering that it has had the privilege of giving you the finest thrashing of your life."

Fletcher turned pale. He looked as if he were going to strike the speaker on the mouth. But before he could raise his hand Hilary suddenly forced herself between them.

"Mr. Fletcher," she said, her voice quivering with anger, "go instantly! There is your boat. And never come near us again!"

Fletcher fell back a step, but he was too furious to obey such a command.

"Do you think I am going to leave that confounded humbug to have it all his own way?" he snarled. "I tell you——"

But here Culver intervened.

"You shut up!" he ordered, sternly. "We've had too much of you already. You had better go."

He took Fletcher imperatively by the arm, but Jacques intervened.

"Pray let the gentleman speak, Dick," he said. "It will ease his feelings perhaps."

"No!" broke in Hilary, breathlessly. "No, no! I won't listen! I tell you I won't!" facing the big man almost fiercely. "Tell me yourself if you like!"

He looked at her closely, still with that odd half-smile upon his face.

Then, before them all, he took her hand and, bending, held it to his lips.

"Thank you, Hilary!" he said, very softly.

In the privacy of her own cabin Hilary removed her tatters and cooled her tingling cheeks. She and her brother were engaged to dine at Dick's bungalow that night, but an overwhelming shyness possessed her, and at the last moment she persuaded Bertie to go alone. It was plain that for some reason Bertie was hugely amused, and she thought it rather heartless of him.

She dined alone on the house-boat with her face to the river. Her fright had made her somewhat nervous, and she was inclined to start at every sound. When the meal was over she went up to her favourite retreat on the upper deck. A golden twilight still lingered in the air, and the river was mysteriously calm. But the girl's heart was full of a heavy restlessness. Each time she heard a punt-pole striking on the bed of the river she raised her head to look.

He came at last—the man for whom her heart waited. He was punting rapidly down-stream, and she could not see his face. Yet she knew him, by the swing of his arms, the goodly strength

"FLETCHER SUDDENLY PUSHED FORWARD WITH AN OATH THAT STARTLED THEM ALL. 'I SHOULD KNOW THAT HAND ANYWHERE!' HE EXCLAIMED. 'YOU INFERNAL, LYING IMPOSTOR!'"

of his muscles—and by the suffocating beating of her heart. She saw that one hand was bandaged, and a passionate feeling that was almost rapture thrilled through and through her at the sight. Then he shot beyond her vision, and she heard the punt bump against the house-boat.

"It's a gentleman to see you, miss," said the Badger, thrusting a grey and grinning visage up the stairs.

"Ask him to come up," said Hilary, steadying her voice.

A moment later she rose to receive the man she loved. And her heart suddenly ceased to beat.

"You!" she gasped, in a choked whisper.

He came straight forward. The last light of the day shone on his smooth brown face, with its steady eyes and strong mouth.

"Yes," he said, and still through his quiet tones she seemed to hear a faint echo of the subdued twang which dwellers in the Far West sometimes acquire. "I, John Merrivale, late of California, beg to render to you, Hilary St. Orme, in addition to my respectful homage, that freedom for which you have not deigned to ask."

She stared at him dumbly, one hand pressed against her breast. The ripple of the river ran softly through the silence. Slowly at last Merrivale turned to go.

And then, uncertainly, she spoke.

"Wait, please!" she said.

She moved close to him and laid her hand on the flower-bedecked balustrade, trembling very much.

"Why have you done this?" Her quivering voice sounded like a prayer.

He hesitated, then answered her quietly.

"I did it because I loved you."

"And what did you hope to gain by it?" breathed Hilary.

He did not reply, and she drew a little nearer as though his silence reassured her.

"Wouldn't it have saved a lot of trouble," she said, her voice very low but no longer uncertain, "if you had given me my freedom in the first place? Don't you think you ought to have done that?"

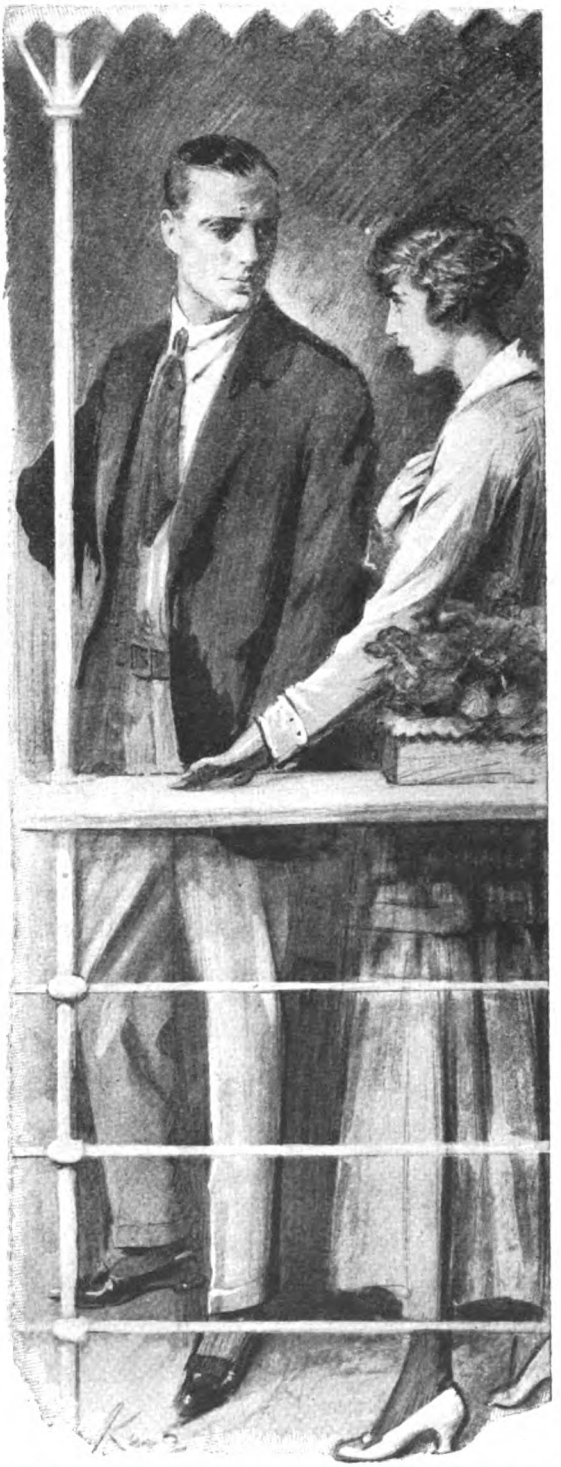
"I don't know," Merrivale said. "That fellow spoilt my game. So I offer it to you now—with apologies."

"I should have appreciated it—in the first place," said Hilary, and suddenly there was a ripple of laughter in her voice like an echo of the water below them. "But now I—I—have no use for it. It's too late. Do you know, Jack, I'm not sure he did spoil your game, after all."

He turned towards her swiftly, and she thrust out her hands to him with a quick sob that became a laugh as she felt his arms about her.

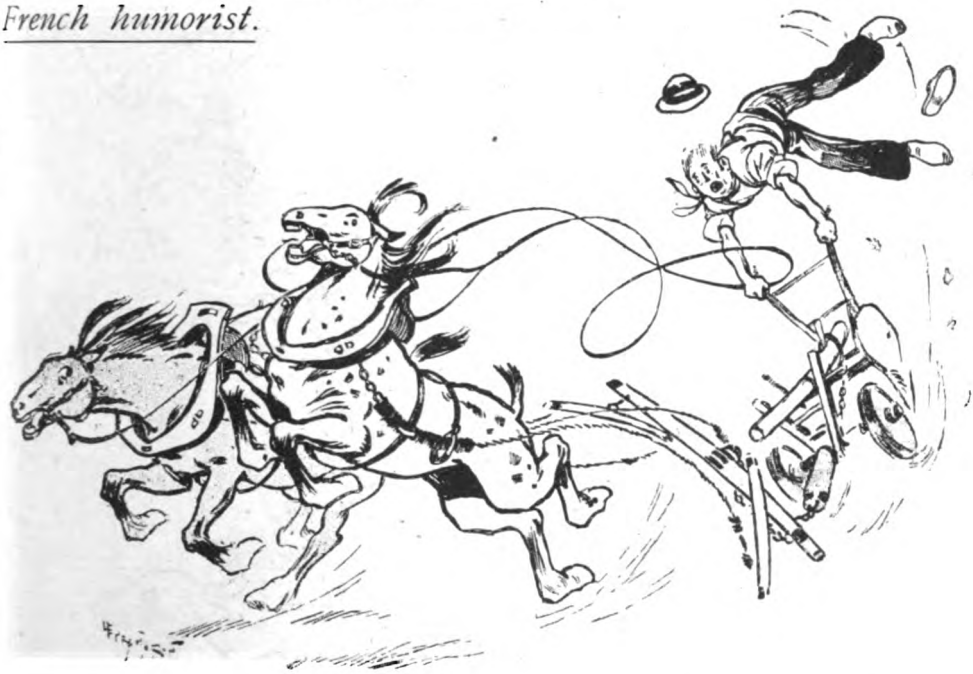
"You hairless monster!" she said. "What woman ever wanted freedom when she could have—Love?"

Two days later Viscount Merrivale's friends at the club read with interest and some amusement the announcement that his marriage to Miss Hilary St. Orme had been fixed to take place on the last day of the month.



"'WHY HAVE YOU DONE THIS?' HE HESITATED, THEN ANSWERED HER QUIETLY: 'I DID IT BECAUSE I LOVED YOU.'"

Here is something amusing by a new French humorist.



The Rebellion of Animals.

THE news agencies have sent us a series of despatches which we publish in the order in which we have received them. Their importance will be obvious to every reader.

Paris, June 15th.—The rebellion of cart-horses is in full swing. A great meeting has been held in a public square. Fourteen motor-cars and twenty-two side-cars have been broken up and twenty-three chauffeurs locked up in a garage. A former winner of the *Grand Prix de Paris* has been chosen president.

Châteauroux, June 16th. — All the "old maids' pets" have formed a Red League. Grave disorders are expected. The cats, the poodles, and the parrots have turned upon their mistresses and are out in strength.

Nogent-le-Roi, June 19th. — The plough-horses, having ducked their masters in the horse-trough, have made common cause with the cows, who have kicked over all the milking-stools. The spirit of revolt is

beginning to make its appearance among the goats. They have issued a statement that they are masters of the future.

Nogent-le-Roi, June 21st.—The cocks and hens have raised the flag of revolution after the speech of a Leghorn cock. The geese were especially enthusiastic. The eggs in a hundred and twelve incubators were broken and the chicks set free.

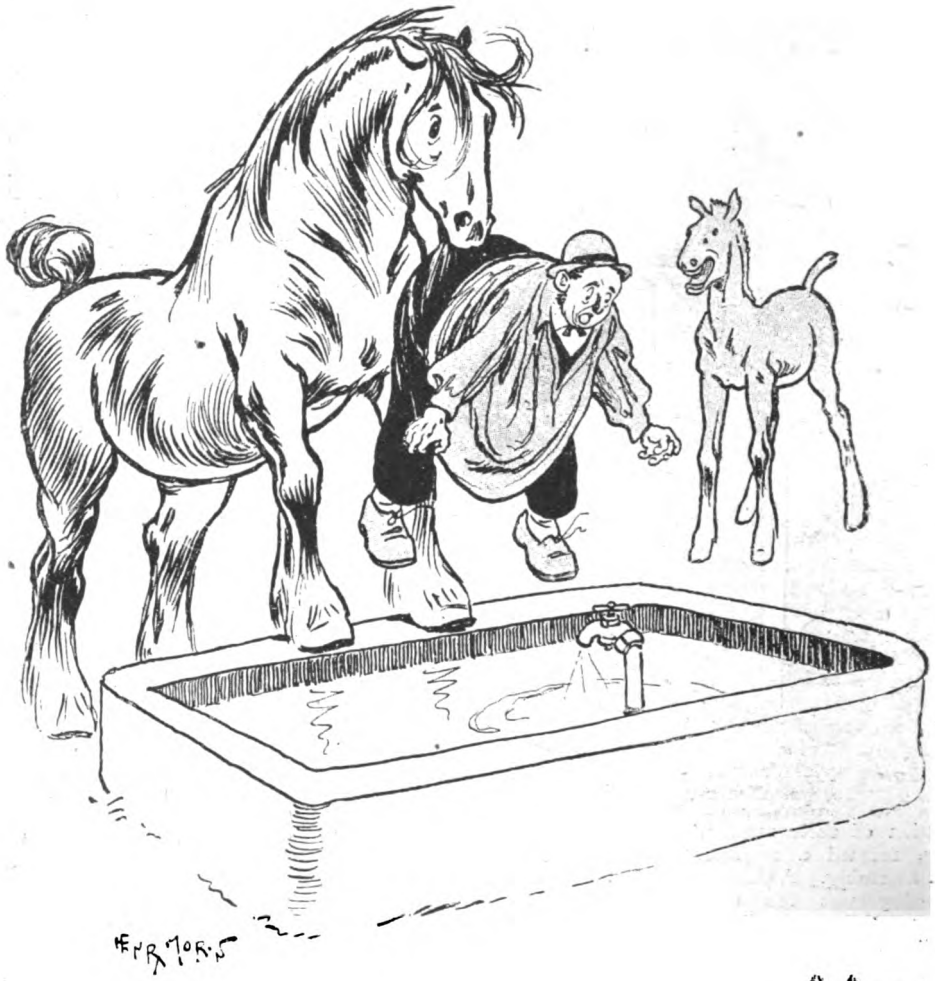
Mont Saint-Michel, June 24th.—The rebellion is spreading. The sheep have joined in. The Southdowns have sent a delegation from England. They have issued a manifesto ending with the watchword "No More Shearing!"

Limoges, June 25th.—A great meeting of the rebels has taken place in the field where the fair is held. The dogs, who had previously taken over

possession of their masters' houses, formed a majority of the assembly. A German sheep-dog was the chief speaker. "Comrades," he said, "never again will we be slaves of man! From this time forward he must give to each of us what we require—hay, grain, or meat. He must provide us with proper housing. He must——"

At this point the speaker was interrupted—by a donkey.

"Well," said he, "isn't that how things have always been? *I* have always had a man-slave, who has built my house, who sweeps it out every morning, who brings me my hay twice a day! For my part, I am quite satisfied. I am going to the cinema!"



They all went to the cinema—after having booed the German dog.

Paris, June 30th.—Calm is everywhere restored. France breathes again. The rebels have gone back to their stables.

PICTURES *that* SET MEN THINKING

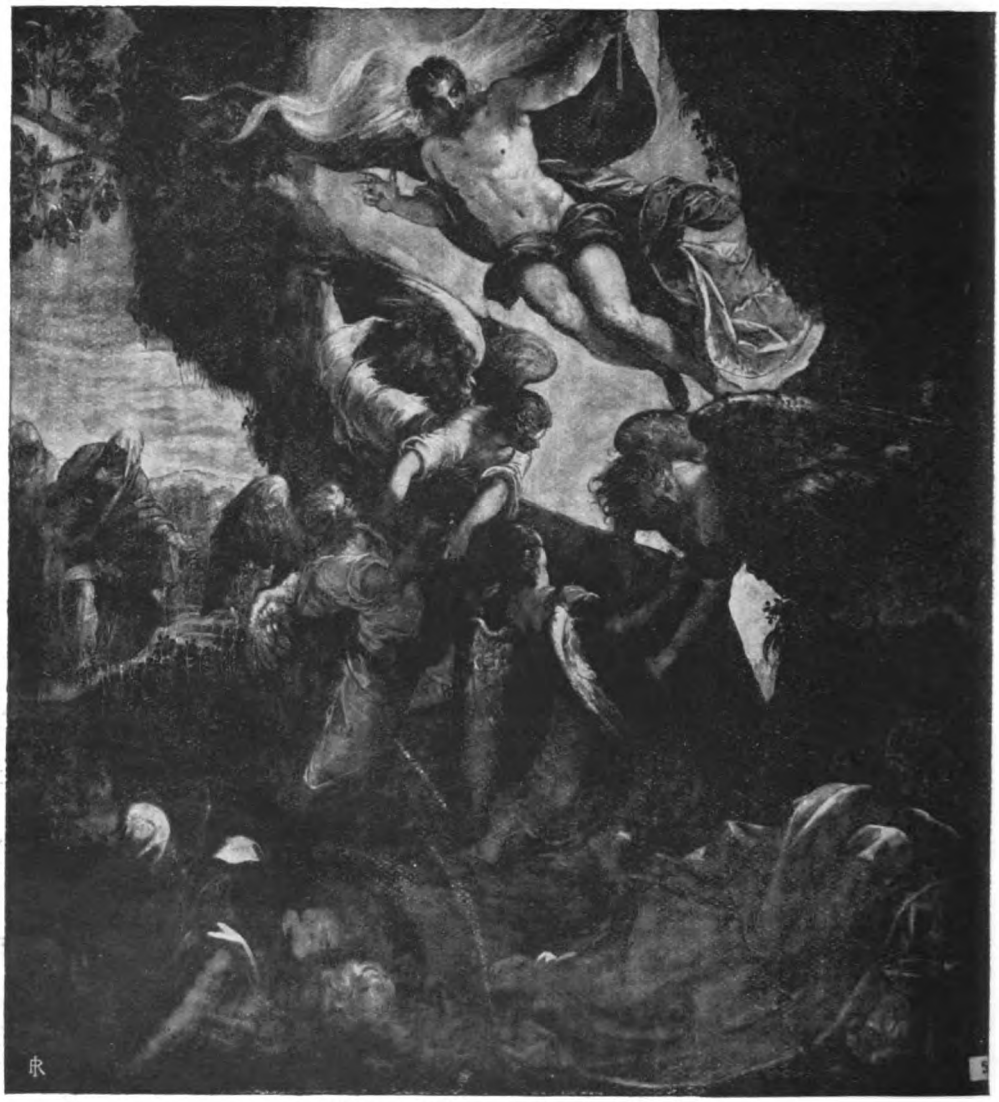
A SYMPOSIUM OF WELL-KNOWN ARTISTS.

"Of all the pictures you have seen, which do you best remember?" This question has been put to a number of our leading artists, with the results that are shown in the illustrations to this article.

IT is the fashion to-day with our superior art critics to decry a "subject" picture. The more a picture is merely colour or form, without meaning or idea, the more beautiful and artistic it is in their eyes. Yet if art is to be of service to mankind generally, it must have some relation to the actualities of life; it must tell a story or express an idea. Practically every picture which leaves a lasting memory does the one thing or the other.

"MORE HEAVENS THAN ONE," BY A. KEMP TEBBY.

By permission of S. Hildesheimer & Co., Ltd., publishers of the engraving.

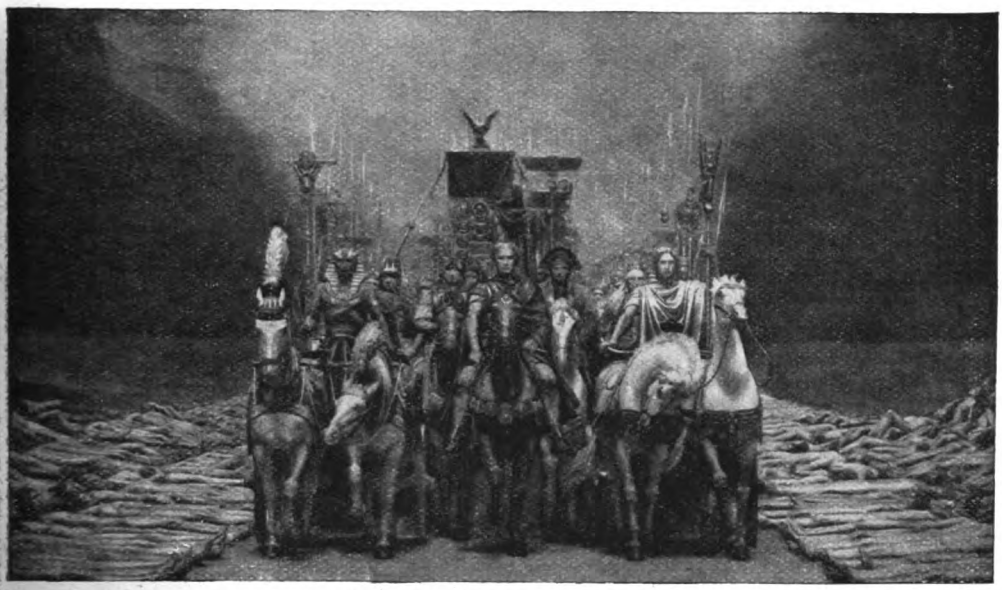


"THE RESURRECTION," BY TINTORETTO.

The picture which appears on the previous page, "More Heavens Than One," is the kind to which we refer, quite apart from any merit as an artistic work. The contrast between the lives and ideals of the two women is so striking that no one who has seen it can ever forget it.

In the course of a chat in his beautiful garden at Kensington, Sir Edward Poynter, R.A., offered from his well-stored recollections of the European galleries a veritable "embarrassment of riches," mentioning, with running comment on their characteristic features, such varied works as Millais' "Vale of Rest," Leighton's "Cimabue," Watts's "Sic Transit Gloria Mundi," Frith's "Derby Day," Herkomer's "The Last Muster," Turner's "Battle of the Nile," Gericault's "The Raft," Descamps' "Samson Pulling Down the Pillars," Paul Veronese's "Crucifixion," and Tintoretto's "Resurrection." It was the last-named picture which first came into his mind, and, as Sir Edward remarked, any collection of the most striking pictures ought to include some example of the painter's presentation of the most dramatic of all stories. And so it is by Tintoretto's "Resurrection" that the ex-President of the Royal Academy is represented in this symposium.

Comparatively few people have seen Fritel's picture, "The Conquerors" (page 167), in the Lucerne Gallery; but engravings have probably made it familiar to the majority of our readers. It was chosen by Mr. Arthur Hacker, A.R.A., as "a most striking picture," which he would like to have painted himself. "It is a fine conception,"



"THE CONQUERORS," BY FRITEL.
By permission of Maison Ad. Braun & Co.

"THE SURRENDER OF BREDA," BY VELAZQUEZ.

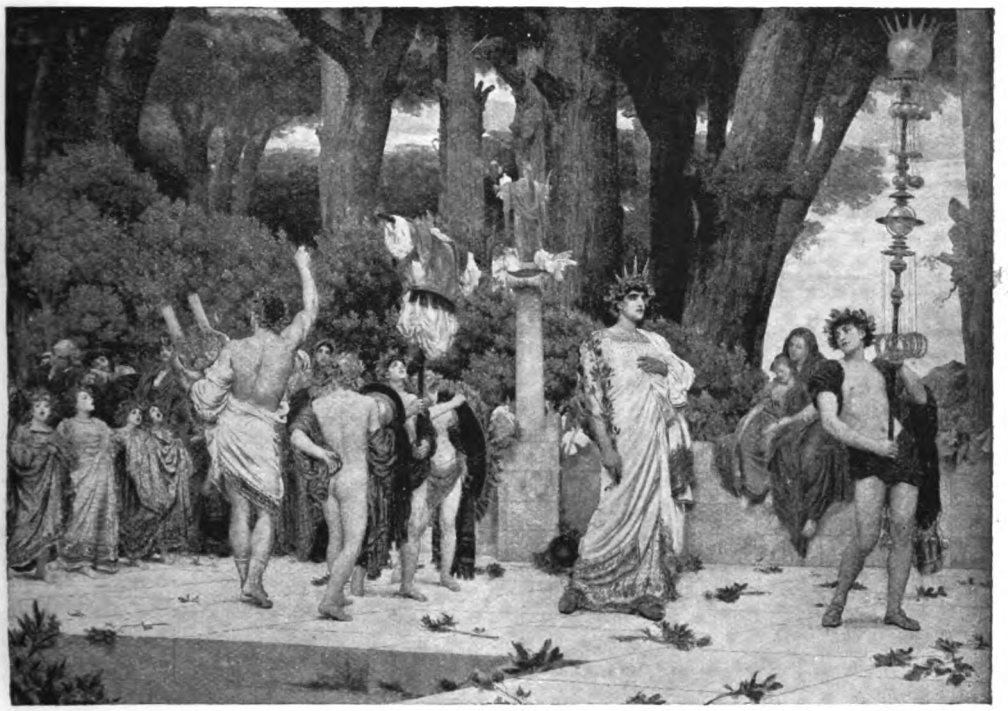
he added, "finely carried out." Some most striking subjects have been spoilt by bad treatment. But in the case of "The Conquerors" a very clever idea has been very cleverly carried out. Perhaps at the close of the Great War this picture makes an even stronger appeal to our feelings than it did before the Kaiser's mad attempt to add his portrait to the group of conquerors, from Hannibal to Napoleon, here depicted in symbolic proximity to the slain humanity which was the price of their ambition. Pierre Fritel, the painter of the picture, it may be of interest to add, was a Paris artist of the last century, a pupil of Millet and Cabanal. "The Conquerors" was exhibited at the Salon in 1879, and was awarded a medal, being eventually purchased for the Lucerne Museum. No other work from Fritel's brush has achieved similar success.

Mr. Seymour Lucas, R.A., unlike Sir Edward Poynter, had not the slightest difficulty about his choice. He answered without a moment's hesitation—Velazquez's "Surrender of Breda" (page 167).

"When I first saw an engraving of this picture at the house of a friend," Mr. Lucas says, "it drove me to Madrid, in order that I might see the original at the Prado Gallery. I was then only a young man, but the memory of it has remained ineffaceable. No other picture has so

"THE BITTERNESS OF DAWN," BY JOHN A. LOMAX.

By kind permission of the British Art Co., Ltd., 98, New Bond St., W.1, publishers of the engraving



"THE DAPHNEPHORIA," BY LORD LEIGHTON.

By permission of the Fine Art Society, Ltd., publishers of the engraving.

"THE RAFT," BY GERICAULT.

By permission of Maison Ad. Braun & Co

impressed me by its combination of fine qualities —a fine subject finely painted, with composition, colour, form, as near perfection as may be."

"The Surrender of Breda"—sometimes called "The Lances"—is believed to have been painted by the great Spanish artist about 1647. Breda, a Dutch town about thirty miles north of Antwerp, was surrendered to the Spaniards, under Spinola, in 1625. At the moment chosen by the painter, the Dutch commander, Justins of Nassau, is handing the keys of the town to the victorious Spinola, behind whom are the serried ranks of the Spaniards holding their lances aloft, whilst in the background is a vast landscape of the Low Country, dotted with fortifications. It is said that Velazquez painted the picture from details of the scene given to him many years before by Spinola himself, when they were fellow-travellers from Barcelona to Milan.

Alma-Tadema's "The Roses of Heliogabalus" was the choice of the Hon. John Collier.

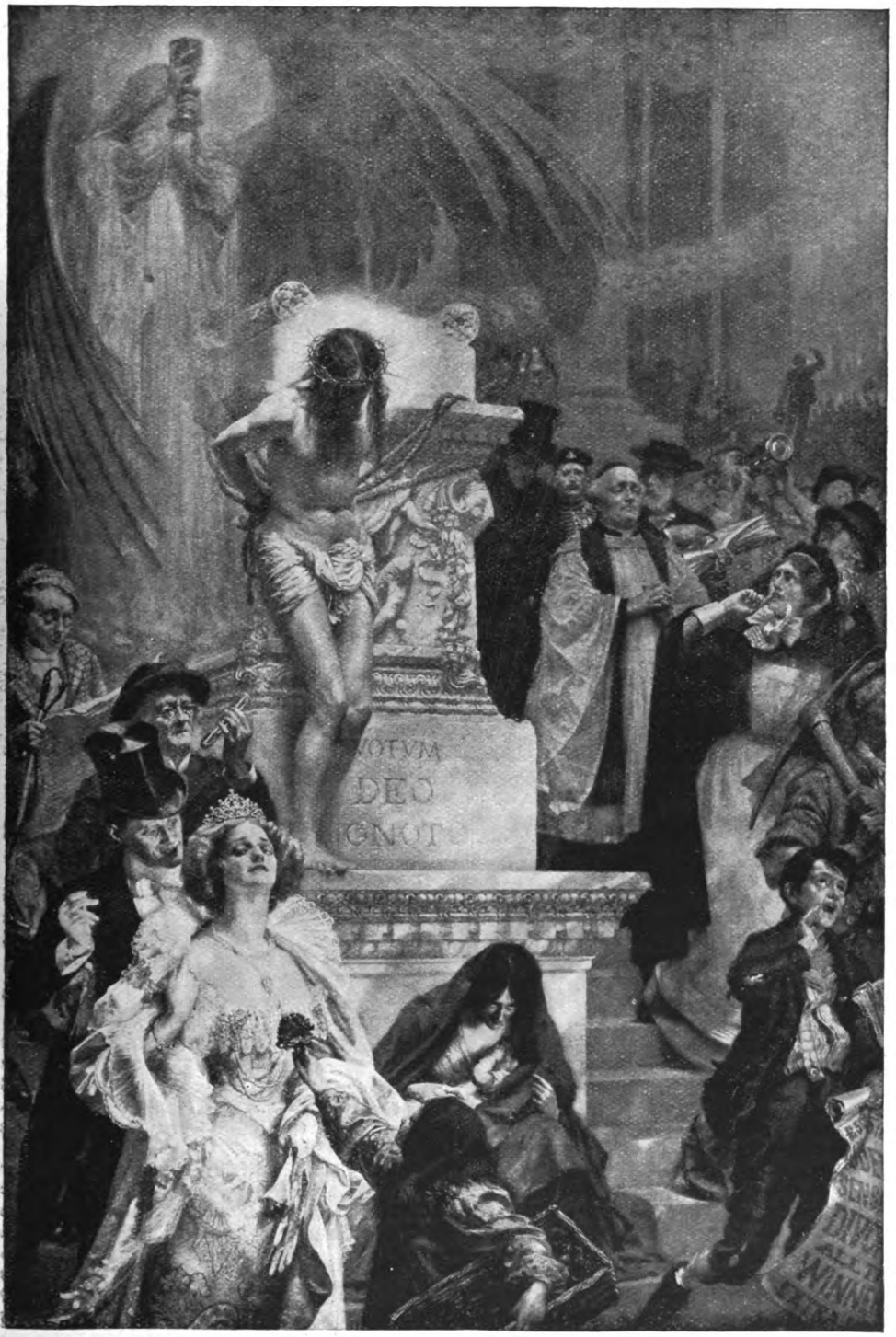
"The picture is really based," remarks Mr. Collier, "on a grim story of this Roman Emperor, who is said to have slain a number of maidens by smothering them with roses. But Alma-Tadema had always an eye for the picturesque, and it is only as a most picturesque incident that he has presented it on canvas. In my opinion, it is one of the most impressive and beautiful pictures ever painted."

Unluckily, it is impossible to reproduce in these pages "The Roses of Heliogabalus." The picture belongs to Sir John Aird, Bart., and, unlike his predecessor, from whom he inherited it, he objects to the reproduction of any of his pictures in any circumstances whatever—as was explained when application was made to him for permission to include "The Roses of Heliogabalus" in the illustration to our article.

"THE DEVIL'S DAUGHTER," BY MARGARET LINDSAY WILLIAMS.
By kind permission of the Fine Arts Publishing Co., Ltd., 15, Green St., W.C.2, publishers of the engraving.

So, for the time being at least, this great masterpiece of Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema is only for the private delectation of Sir John Aird and his friends.

"In my opinion," said Mr. J. C. Dollman, the painter of many well-remembered contributions to the Royal Academy in recent years, "it is very lamentable that subject-pictures should have fallen into such discredit, owing to the combined efforts of a number of writers on art in the Press. Their writing has had so much effect that comparatively few artists have now the courage to paint pictures with subjects of



"DESPISED AND REJECTED OF MEN," BY SIGISMUND GOETZE.

By kind permission of Mawson, Swan & Morgan, Ltd., Newcastle-on-Tyne, publishers of the engraving.

"THE WOUNDED CAVALIER," BY W. S. BURTON.
By kind permission of the Corporation of the City of London.

wide human interest. I am one of about a dozen of us who have stuck to our guns, and continued to paint such pictures in spite of these critics, and I mean to go on doing so until the end. It is probably only a passing phase, and subject-pictures will come to their own again; but in the meantime, we who paint them have to suffer to some extent from the prejudice which has been created against them.

"You ask me which subject-picture I remember best. Well, the picture which first comes into my mind is Frith's 'Derby Day.' This picture is not thought much of to-day, and yet I do not hesitate to say that in my judgment it was a great achievement, equalling the work of some of the great Dutch masters in its presentation of varied types of humanity. Despised as it may be by our fashionable critics, 'The Derby Day' will live as a most striking picture and a great work of art." On further consideration, however, Mr. Dollman chose, not "The Derby Day," but a very different work—Lord Leighton's "Daphnephoria"—as "the one picture of our modern time which makes the greatest appeal to me, for beauty and for grandeur of conception" (page 168-9).

This picture was painted by Lord Leighton in 1876, when he was at the zenith of his power. It depicts an ancient Greek festival—"The Daphnephoria," or Laurel-Bearers—held every nine years at Thebes, in honour of Apollo, of which the central figure was a boy, chosen for beauty and strength, followed in procession by a chorus of maidens singing a hymn to the god.

Mr. Richard Jack, A.R.A., in reply to an inquiry, recalled a picture he had seen during his student days in Paris about twenty-five years ago, and had not seen since. This was "The Buccaneers," by Frank Brangwyn, R.A. It was hung at the Salon, and was so popular—as Mr. Jack averred—that the carpet on the floor around it was quite worn by the time the exhibition closed.

"The Buccaneers" was sold to a French gentleman, whose name and address Mr. Brangwyn has forgotten, and it has therefore been found impossible to reproduce it. As Mr. Jack describes the picture, it represents a group of pirates on the deck of their ship, preparing for an attack upon a passing merchantman, the scene being full of brilliant, tropical sunshine. Apart from the vivid colouring, Mr. Jack said he remembered the picture for its extraordinary power and virility. The group of men were as fine a set of real villains as you could possibly imagine, with

nothing of the stage buccaneers about them such as one would see in a Covent Garden opera.

Mr. Edgar Bundy, A.R.A., himself the painter of many striking subject-pictures, mentioned "The Doctor" and Gericault's "The Raft" in the course of conversation. We have therefore included "The Raft" among our illustrations.

Of all the many shipwreck pictures that have been painted, Mr. Bundy considered this to be about the most powerful.

Jean Gericault exhibited "The Raft" (page 169) at the Paris Salon of 1819. It is recorded that at the Salon the picture excited so much hostile criticism that Gericault, in despair, left Paris, and settled for two years in London, where "The Raft" was again exhibited. In London the picture was received with enthusiasm. Eventually Paris reconsidered its first verdict, and endorsed that of London, the canvas being bought by the French nation and placed in the Louvre, where it now hangs.

Sir Luke Fildes, R.A., and Mr. Frank Dicksee, R.A., both found it impossible to make definite choice of a picture, but Mr. Dudley Hardy plumped without reservation or qualification for Turner's "Victory," at Greenwich Hospital.

Symbolism and a religious *motif* characterize a recent canvas, which, in its engraved form, is proving perhaps the most striking picture of the moment—"The Devil's Daughter" (page 170), by Margaret Lindsay Williams, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1917. The picture created something of a sensation at Burlington House, although there was considerable division of opinion as to its real meaning. On this point it may be as well to allow the artist to speak for herself.

Miss Lindsay Williams says: "The girl is suggestive of the material tendency of our time; she carries in her left hand a skull symbolic of corruption and of the path which she has for the present chosen, and in her right hand is a fan symbolic of frivolity. Although the costume suggests the stage, I do not mean to point at the stage in any particular sense, but to materialism wherever it may be found. To the right of the picture a hand is seen holding a crucifix illumined and alive. The arms of the Christ are outstretched towards her appealingly, but she passes by. Although I have used a crucifix in the picture I do not mean it to stand for any particular Church: to me it is the greatest symbol the world has ever seen. To me it stands for love and sacrifice at their noblest, which includes the best in all the Churches but also a great deal more."

"The Devil's Daughter" had a sequel in "The Triumph," at the Academy, in 1918. This depicts the triumph of the girl's soul in overcoming the temptations of the flesh.

There are, of course, many striking pictures which are not included in this selection. By most people, we suppose, Doré would be accounted a painter of some of the most striking pictures ever painted, and, although selection is difficult, "The Christian Martyrs" may, perhaps, be given the palm for the immediate and powerful impression it makes.

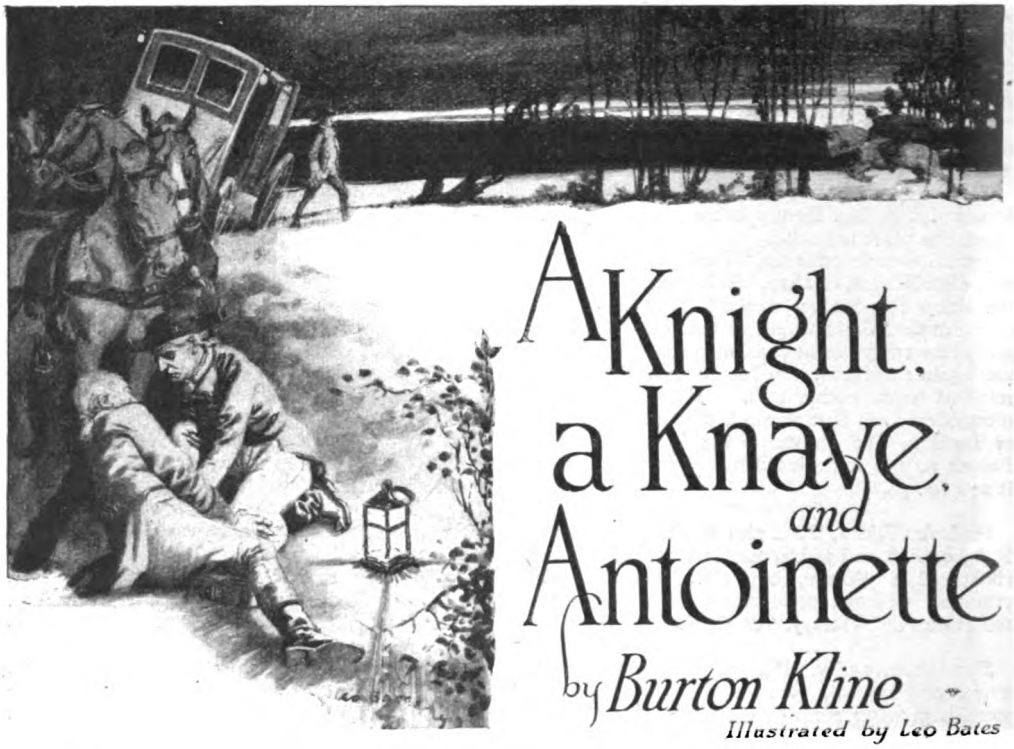
In contrast with Doré's daring realism may be placed the vivid symbolism of another picture having a religious theme, "Despised and Rejected of Men," by Sigismund Goetze (page 171). This may possibly be regarded as the most striking of several somewhat similar symbolical pictures produced during the last quarter of a century, although some people would doubtless give preference to the late Mr. Byam Shaw's "Love, the Conqueror."

Finally, we took the opinion of Mr. A. G. Temple, the Director of the Guildhall Art Gallery, whose knowledge of European art collections is unrivalled.

In making a selection, however, Mr. Temple did not think it necessary to go beyond the walls of the Gallery of which for so many years he has had charge.

"The Wounded Cavalier," by W. S. Burton (page 172), is one of the most popular pictures in the collection of the Corporation of the City of London. "It is a picture," says Mr. Temple, "of the most striking power, as is shown, perhaps, by the circumstances in which it was exhibited at the Royal Academy. Through some mischance, it was minus the usual descriptive label when brought before the Hanging Committee. No one knew the title of the picture, or the name of the painter. Nevertheless, the Committee were so impressed by the work that they resolved to accept it. It was given a number, and was included in the catalogue under this number, without name or description. Of course, when the Academy was opened, Burton came forward and claimed his picture."

As an artist, W. S. Burton may be compared with "single-speech Hamilton." Not only did he never repeat the popular success achieved with "The Wounded Cavalier," but it is practically the only work from his brush which has won any recognition whatever.



A Knight, a Knave, and Antoinette

by Burton Kline

Illustrated by Leo Bates

THE Sieur de Bonnefois rode homeward in his coach and six toward the close of day. Over his features, genial for all they were proud, but especially about his shrewd and fearless blue-grey eyes, played a contented smile—as why should it not? The Sieur de Bonnefois was a handsome man. He might have been one or two and thirty. His neighbours greatly esteemed him for his probity and good sense. The income from his estates ran to one hundred thousand francs a year, and his personal property was estimated at well over a million.

Such a man has no excuse for unhappiness. He entertained, not lavishly, but in exquisite taste. His horses and dogs were many; and his friends owed him much for the capital sport which he freely offered them in hunting over his large preserves. A more frivolous young man might have been spoiled by the attentions of women; but the Sieur de Bonnefois preferred the quiet country to the Court, and often congratulated himself on a freedom which no feminine spell had ever been able to violate.

This day, moreover, the Sieur de Bonnefois had special cause for contentment. The fair at the near-by town of Féricourt had been blessed by gorgeous weather, and the Sieur de Bonnefois, who very ably managed his own affairs, had disposed of his wheat and cattle for very much more than the twenty thousand francs they brought him annually at the market. His lumbering coach, with the merry scenes from Watteau painted on its panels, fetched with every lurch the jingle of golden coins from the fat leathern bag that lay between his feet. One circumstance alone had troubled an otherwise perfect day for the Sieur de Bonnefois.

At the fair his friend and neighbour, Monsieur Connard, pausing in the middle of a bargain over a dozen fat Hollandish cows, had dropped a bit of news. "Have you recently heard from your nephew, Monsieur de Bonnefois?"

"You mean the Comte de Bray?" The Sieur de Bonnefois sighed and shook his head. "No, my friend. And, alas, in his case no news has come to be doubly good news. But why do you ask? Has he gone from worse to worst?"

"My friend, I hope you will take this in good part. But I have good reason to urge you to be on your guard against that young man."

"Again? Have you yourself, then, had news?"

"Be content to take my advice, monsieur, if you please. You yourself are still young. You have no other heir. The count is wild. And he grows impatient. I have heard from Paris, it is true, and of his wild ways there. His name has even been coupled with the poisoning of the Princess Henriette."

"So I had heard." Again the Sieur de Bonnefois shook his head. "And he was so fine, so sweet, as a boy!"

"I also learned of his threats against you, Monsieur de Bonnefois. But, then, he was perhaps in his cups, and it meant nothing.

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Nevertheless, be sure that shrewd eye of yours is always alert."

"I see. My nephew cannot wait for my death?"

"Monsieur, these are violent times. Be on your guard. I have spoken." And the bargaining had gone forward without further interruption.

This incident returned to De Bonnefois' mind as he rode on homeward. Perhaps he thought of it because the gathering dusk gave point to Monsieur Connard's advice and to his timely warning of the menacing turbulence of the times.

"Poor Charles!" De Bonnefois thought. "So handsome, so generous, and so violent! The ladies spoil him. Where will his wild ways lead him? Perhaps"—the Sieur de Bonnefois lifted his eyes in deeper thought—"perhaps I ought to take him with me, and exercise what restraint I may. But, no; the woods of Berri would drive him to distraction with ennui. He must go his ways. As for his threats against me"—De Bonnefois laughed lightly—"I think he will find it wise to wait. He will find my promise is good. But sometimes I wish——"

There his ruminations were cut short by a sharp cry from one of his postilions. The coach came to a halt with a suddenness that sent the Sieur de Bonnefois from his seat. And among the horses ahead he heard wild scuffling of feet and finally a groan.

Hastening forward he quickly learned from the remaining postilion what had occurred. The off-horse of the forward pair had slipped aside in fright and fallen, taking with him the postilion, who sat astride. The poor fellow they quickly dragged to the roadside, where it was found that his thigh was broken. The horse himself was in dire distress with broken bones.

"He took fright of something, sire," the flunkey could only explain.

"Did you see anything—anybody?"

"No, sire. But I think it was something in yon woods."

"H'm!" was De Bonnefois' only comment.

An injured horse they could easily have left by the wayside, to be cared for afterward. A sorely injured man was more of a problem. As a measure of precaution De Bonnefois walked back to his coach for his pistols, while he should decide what to do. At length he gave orders to the rider who remained unhurt to free and mount one of the nags and ride back to Féricourt for a chirurgeon. Yet even before the horse could be unhitched came the sound of hoofs on the road some distance behind them. So hard was the gallop that De Bonnefois had scarcely looked to his pistols when the rider was upon him.

"Ah! Monsieur de Bonnefois!" the rider cried. "Has something befallen?"

In the new-comer De Bonnefois recognized a priest of the neighbourhood, for so the fellow had always called himself, whom he had encountered at the fair in a condition not altogether consistent with his pious pretensions.

"Yes, my dear abbé," De Bonnefois said, much relieved, in spite of his ancient suspicions of the fellow. "An accident has occurred to one of my horses, and one of my men is hurt."

"Is it serious? My house is not much farther along. Let me help you there. Perhaps now you will consent to partake of my hospitality after all!" The self-styled priest laughed out the sarcasm, recalling, perhaps, as De Bonnefois certainly did, his jovial invitation at the fair Monsieur de Bonnefois had declined as politely as he could, considering the repugnance and suspicion he felt toward the pretended man of God.

While they paused to parley the night had come well upon them, and De Bonnefois yielded to the conviction that there was nothing for it except to accept the priestly one's invitation. Accordingly the eager host rode on to summon a man who should stay by the injured postilion till better help should come.

In a few minutes he returned, bringing a lantern, in the light of which they were able to straighten the tangled gear and drive the four remaining horses to the coach into the abbé's courtyard.

The Sieur de Bonnefois had often passed this place, and he now took note of it with some curiosity. The parsonage was an ancient building, all that was left of a very elegant seigniorial mansion raised, it was said, as long ago as the Crusades.

Besides the "priest's" dwelling only the castle chapel remained, and now did service as the parish church. What had once been an elaborate garden was become a burial ground, and the moat was simply a ditch filled with water and crossed by a bridge which gave entrance to the abbé's abode. Round about, the great park, once encircling the ancient pile, had been left to grow untouched, so that it had become a tangled forest.

"Enter, my honoured guest," the abbé said as he led the way across the bridge and swung open his door. "Antoinette!" he called, roughly; whereat a young girl approached from a dimly-lighted corner of the room into the somewhat brighter glow from the abbé's lantern. "I have with me the Sieur de Bonnefois, our good neighbour, who has met with a mishap. One of his horses is killed and a man injured. Monsieur de Bonnefois will do us the honour to pass the night here. Be lively with your entertainment."

The girl Antoinette curtsied deeply, a comely maid of one-and-twenty perhaps, very dark, her lips sweet, but her eyes as timid as they were lustrous, and she had the manner of being immensely tired. Even in the light of the lantern De Bonnefois was able to observe that she changed colour at his host's words.

"Be not too light with her, my good friend," the self-appointed abbé laughed out, in his coarse manner. "She has torn the heart of more than one beau in the village yonder. And now, pray, excuse your host. I must see that my modest dwelling is fit for your entertainment. Julie! Jean!" they heard him call to his servants as he passed out of the room and down a dark hall.

For a moment De Bonnefois and the girl Antoinette surveyed each other with lively interest. "Will you be seated, monsieur?" she said, in a low voice, and motioned her distinguished guest to a carved arm-chair standing by.

"Thanks, mademoiselle. I will say it has shaken me to lose so good a horse. And I shall be eager to-morrow to learn what state my poor Jacques is in." And in answer to polite inquiry he described what had occurred, not without notice of Antoinette's very genuine concern. Indeed, De Bonnefois was quite taken with the pretty alarm she displayed. "You must be lonely here, mademoiselle," he said; for the girl appeared to be disinclined toward the lead in conversation.

"It is lonely sometimes, monsieur."

"Do you never go out? Pardon me, but I cannot remember to have had the pleasure of seeing you before."

"It is quite likely, monsieur. I am very much at home." And De Bonnefois glanced at her sharply, because of the odd note in her voice.

"Ah, so you have the care of the place?" He was wondering what could be the relationship of such a girl to the coarse master of the establishment.

But she quickly supplied it, perhaps guessing at his conjecture. "Yes, monsieur; my uncle has given me the care of the place."

Again De Bonnefois looked sharply, at the tone of her speech. "I am sorry you find the duty so heavy," he said, and would have ventured further polite inquiry but that a maidservant entered with a candle, and the abbé followed her into the room.

"Julie has just told me I am wanted at the bedside of a sick man, monsieur," he explained in his loud voice. "I trust you will excuse me? I will cut my absence as short as the occasion will allow."

"Very good, my dear abbé."

"Who is it, uncle?"

Ordinarily the man in clerical garb would have answered: "None of your business, hussy!" With De Bonnefois present he was obliged to be more decorous. "Big Peter, the cobbler," he mumbled hurriedly.

"But I thought I saw him pass only a little while ago," the girl observed, dryly. It was clear that, however browbeaten by her uncle, she was not quite cowed.

Her uncle was furious at the unexpected thrust, and but for De Bonnefois' presence would have burst upon her angrily, but he restrained himself and said: "It is a sudden seizure. Julie has just told me."

"I beg your pardon," the girl said, simply.

"And so you must entertain Monsieur de Bonnefois without me, Antoinette," her uncle said, in parting, but with a meaningful smile.

It was so clear that he was lying, De Bonnefois would have wished even more that he had followed his own counsel and taken his frightened horses home, but a curiosity to know more of this girl and her lot made him stay. It might be, he took thought, that he could aid her.

Under this fresh embarrassment, however, Antoinette displayed an even readier acceptance of silence. To cover her confusion she stepped to a cupboard and took from it some lacework upon which she was engaged. The Sieur de Bonnefois took the liberty of stirring about the room and politely studying the objects of interest it contained. By then the moon had risen and cast its rays across the landscape which De Bonnefois so much admired, so that he was impelled to visit a window and gaze out over the scene.

To his utter astonishment he saw the pretended abbé at no great distance, walking to and fro in the shadows, in company with two other men with whom he was in animated conversation. As the trio approached a bit nearer in their walk, De Bonnefois was even more astonished to recognize one of the men as his nephew. The third man, as he now watched them narrowly, drew from his pocket three knives. One of them he presented to the abbé, the second to the nephew, and the third he restored to the breast of his tunic. Turning from this astounding scene De Bonnefois was reassured to mark the girl Antoinette still unconcernedly engaged upon her embroidery.

While seeking to appear unconcerned himself, his eye happened to fall upon a mirror, and in it he caught a swift glance from the girl, directed at him. As plainly as words could have spoken, it said: "You are in peril. Why did you come? Watch me closely and I may yet save you." And a smile supplied the period.

"What a beautiful moon!" De Bonnefois dryly remarked, perhaps to deceive the lingering maidservant. But, moving close to Antoinette, he said in a low voice: "I hope, mademoiselle, I do not subject you also to danger?"

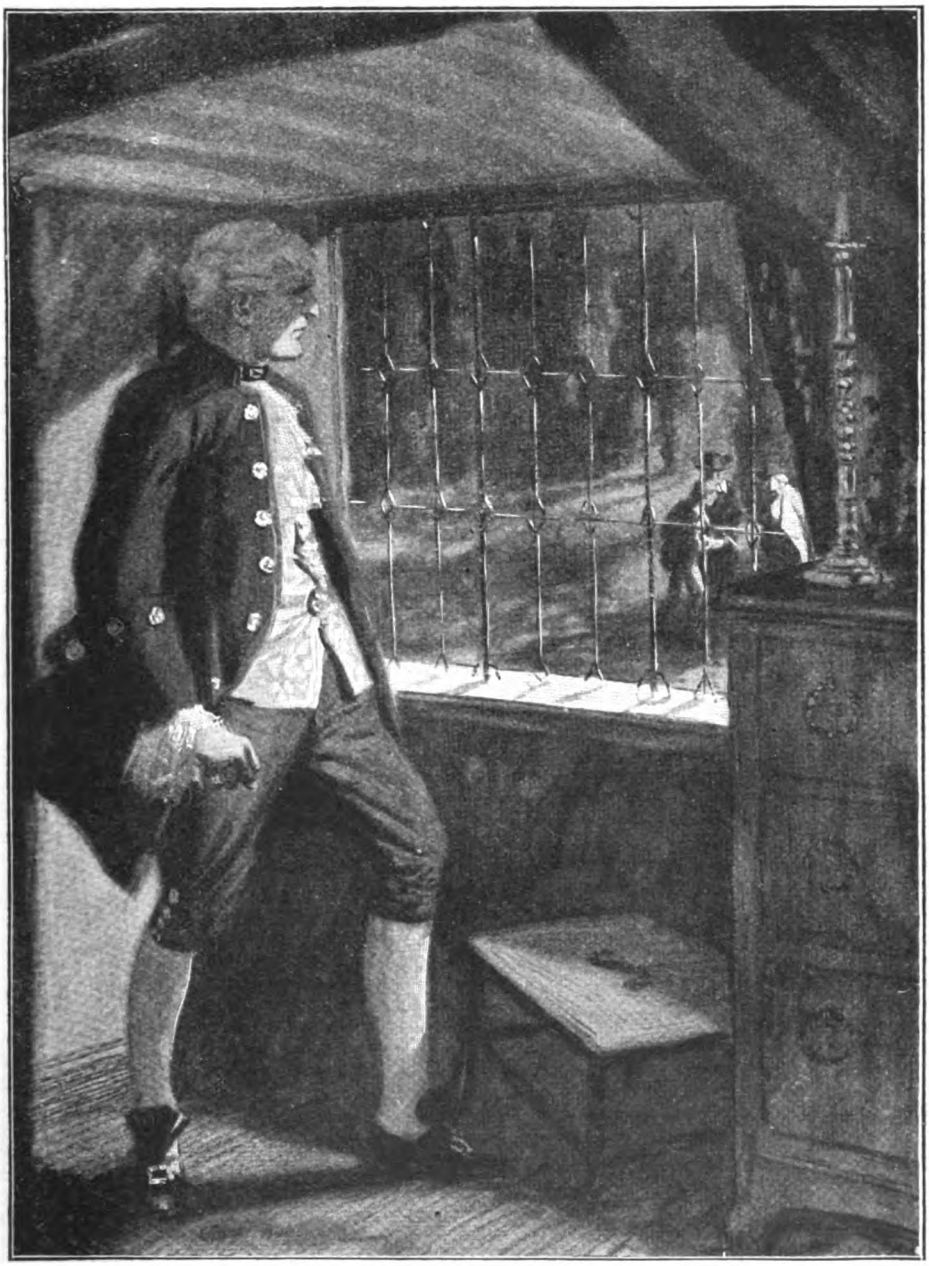
At this instinctive gallantry of a gentleman the girl blushed most handsomely. "Monsieur, I thank you," she whispered, hurriedly. "But perhaps you may be the means of saving me, as I of saving you. Fortunately Jean——"

She was not able to finish, for at that juncture the abbé re-entered the room.

"Well, monsieur, you see I was not so long after all. But I have a favour to ask of you. On my way to see Big Peter I encountered my friend Monsieur Jainnes, from Bruges, who was at the fair to-day. With your permission, monsieur, I have asked him also to be a guest to dinner with us. He will be here shortly. I hope, Antoinette, he does not keep us waiting."

Scarcely had the abbé said this when the barking of a dog gave token of the arrival of this second visitor, and in a moment more that worthy entered. De Bonnefois instantly recognized him as the agent who had distributed the knives. The appearance of the man naturally convinced De Bonnefois that he was caught in a trap. There was likely to be a bit of sword-play in the course of the evening, or perhaps a little shooting, to the discomfiture of Mademoiselle Antoinette.

As the supper hour approached, the abbé cordially offered his principal guest the privilege of retiring to his room and removing the stains of travel. This De Bonnefois readily accepted,



"TO HIS UTTER ASTONISHMENT HE SAW THE PRETENDED ABBÉ IN COMPANY WITH TWO OTHER MEN, AND WAS EVEN MORE ASTONISHED TO RECOGNIZE ONE OF THE MEN AS HIS NEPHEW."

since it offered opportunity for the hiding of his money and a minute to see to his pistols, although he was quite content with the blade at his side, in the use of which he was not without reputation.

On leaving the hall he had passed closely enough to Antoinette to receive from her a quick sign to bolt his door and to expect further report from her. On finishing the examination of his pistols, De Bonnefois therefore thought it best to sit down for a while in his room, and await what plan she might show. While he was sitting thus a slight noise above his head drew his attention. Instinctively reaching for his rapier, he glanced up to the ceiling in time to see a small trap-door open. A slim and graceful hand, as white as milk, was thrust through it, and a paper dropped at his feet. On it De Bonnefois read:—

"My uncle is no priest, but a robber. He and

his men mean to kill you for your money. At supper they will offer you drugged wine. This will throw you into a deep sleep, when the knives will finish you. Jean, the gardener, is an honest young man. He will help to save you and myself at the same time. He, too, wishes to escape from here. Under no circumstances give sign that you are suspicious. They will not strike till you are asleep. Return to your room on some pretext, bolt the door again and wait for us. Do not be alarmed if we enter in an unusual manner. Be careful to burn this note in the candle."

The note was unsigned, but it needed no signature. And De Bonnefois was surprised to find himself, proud scorner of the fair sex, fervently kissing this brave slip of paper!

Such was the merit of its teaching that, when he descended, none could have noted in his manner the slightest trace of his knowledge of the conspiracy against him. His money and his pistols both he had disdainfully left behind him in his room. At the supper table he found Antoinette as gay now as she had been reserved before, and he was soon swept into the same mood by her brave sallies.

The repast proved to be of an excellent savour. From the beginning the abbé and his other guest freely drank, and encouraged De Bonnefois to follow their example. But De Bonnefois was quite his elegant self. A sign from Antoinette, a turn of her soft blue eyes, had served to indicate to him which was the bottle of drugged claret, and he carefully avoided it, for all the abbé's skill in placing it in his way. Nevertheless, he affected to be somewhat touched by his liquor, and asked leave of his host, as soon as it seemed plausible, to retire. Inasmuch as it was now bearing toward twelve, and as De Bonnefois had accepted two glasses of the mischievous wine—which he managed to spill under the table—the permission was granted and the party at supper broke up.

On returning to his room, De Bonnefois bethought him to bolt his door, as prudently counselled to do by his fair saviour, but the bolts had been removed in his absence. So also was the key gone from the lock, and nothing remained except the latch. All he could do by way of protection was to move a heavy chest against the door. He then looked to his pistols, and to his great amazement found that the charges had been removed.

Barely had he made this discovery when a noise beside his bed put him on the alert. With hand on rapier he moved cautiously to the spot. While he watched, a portrait on the wall moved to one side, disclosing a panel. This, too, was slid aside, and in the opening stood Antoinette, and behind her Jean, each with a dark lantern.

They gave him small time to marvel at these contrivances, relics of a day even more turbulent still. Motioning in silence to De Bonnefois to climb through after her, Antoinette held forth a hand to assist him. Even as she did so the latch on the door behind De Bonnefois was slowly lifted. The abbé and his guest had not been slow in their pursuit.

De Bonnefois at once refused to heed the frantic signals of Antoinette, imploring him to hasten his flight with her. As frantically as she he motioned to her instead to fly before the discovery of her might bring vengeance on her head. His purpose was to stay behind and dispatch the villains as they entered. To retire from peril had never been his habit, and stay he would, but that Antoinette, behind his back now, clambered through the open panel and caught his sleeve.

"Come!" she said, in a whipser. The rest she could only gesture;. but as plainly as words the swift uplift of her arms said: "For my sake, then, if not for yours!"

Meanwhile heavy breathing and the scraping of feet on the other side of the oaken door betokened the clumsy efforts of the drunken brigands to push aside the laden chest which De Bonnefois had now mounted to hold it in place.

It happened that Antoinette had employed the only argument with any potency for De Bonnefois. In answer to her appeal he tip-toed back with her to the panel, handed her through it and followed. In noiseless haste the girl slid back the cover and locked it, and moved the portrait into place. Even as she did so they heard the creaking of the door, the scrape of the chest across the floor, and the sprawling tumble of two heavy forms into the room.

Through the inky darkness of a long, winding passage De Bonnefois suffered himself to be led, with Jean in front, and Antoinette behind him with a lantern. By the continued descent of the passage, with frequent short flights of steps, De Bonnefois knew that he was being conducted, towards the last, underground. At length, when they had reached a tiny gallery, provided with a seat by some former harried tenant of the place, Antoinette ordered a halt.

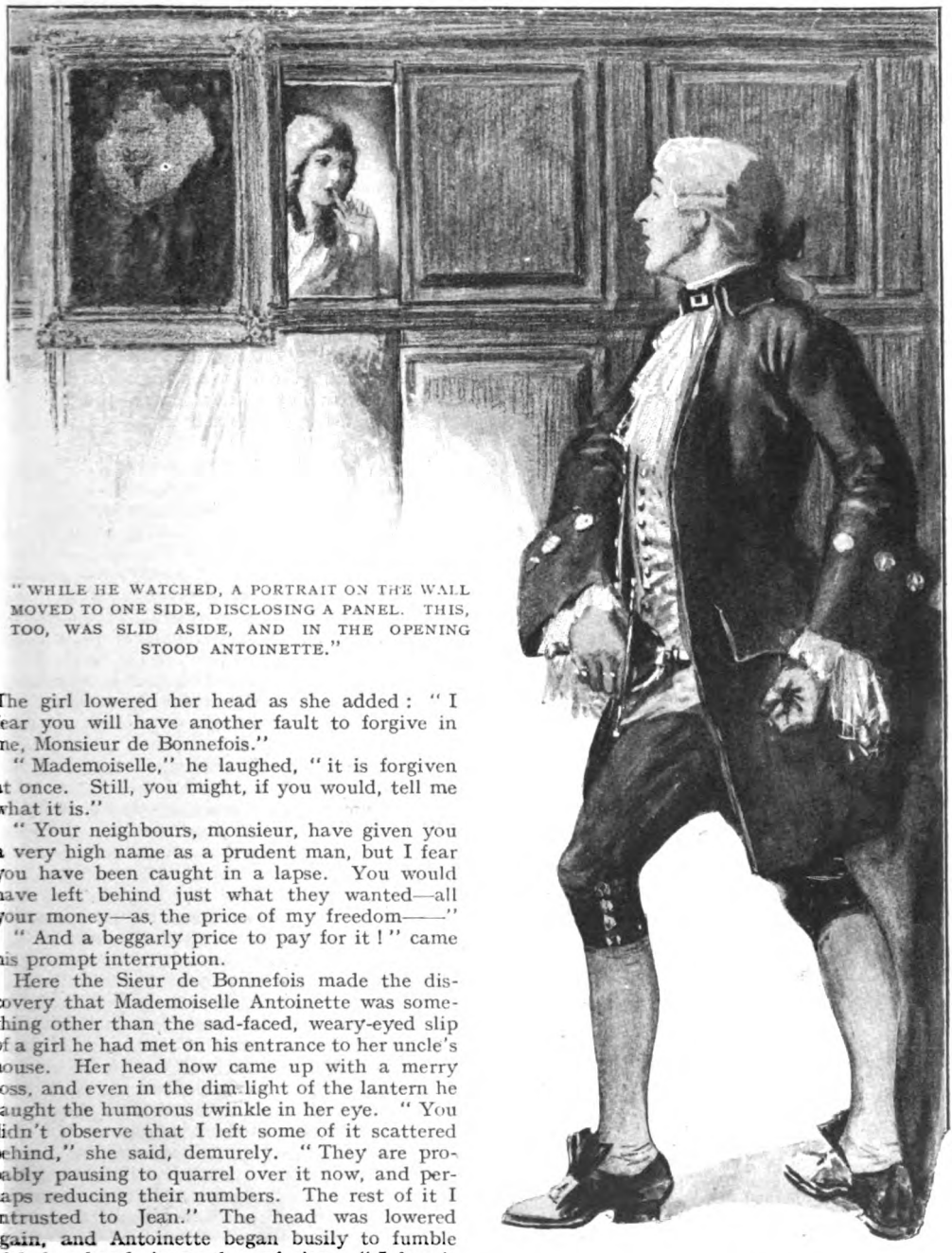
"We must rest," she said, breathlessly, and ended with a laugh, "and do our best to think."

"Mademoiselle," De Bonnefois said, as he seated himself beside her, "this is curious business for me. But so long as it is your command"—he smiled in token of obedience. "Nevertheless, if you will pardon me, I firmly believe you are making an excuse of your own peril to make sure of my escape."

The lively flush that came to her cheeks with his words was probably lost in the niggardly light of the lantern, but the pretty tremor in her voice took its place, as she hastened to reply: "No, my dear Monsieur de Bonnefois, I fear I am making an ignoble use of you. But, truly, you would have been helpless against the odds. My uncle is sure to have gathered his whole band by now."

"My nephew among them, I suppose?" De Bonnefois started up. His wishes, at that thought, were all for going back.

Yet again Antoinette laid her hand on his arm. "Surely," she said, "you will find occation for dealing with him at another time. Meanwhile"—she, too, now rose from her brief rest—"we are not safe here. My uncle will know how we have come and will follow at once."



"WHILE HE WATCHED, A PORTRAIT ON THE WALL MOVED TO ONE SIDE, DISCLOSING A PANEL. THIS, TOO, WAS SLID ASIDE, AND IN THE OPENING STOOD ANTOINETTE."

The girl lowered her head as she added: "I fear you will have another fault to forgive in me, Monsieur de Bonnefois."

"Mademoiselle," he laughed, "it is forgiven at once. Still, you might, if you would, tell me what it is."

"Your neighbours, monsieur, have given you a very high name as a prudent man, but I fear you have been caught in a lapse. You would have left behind just what they wanted—all your money—as the price of my freedom——"

"And a beggarly price to pay for it!" came his prompt interruption.

Here the Sieur de Bonnefois made the discovery that Mademoiselle Antoinette was something other than the sad-faced, weary-eyed slip of a girl he had met on his entrance to her uncle's house. Her head now came up with a merry toss, and even in the dim light of the lantern he caught the humorous twinkle in her eye. "You didn't observe that I left some of it scattered behind," she said, demurely. "They are probably pausing to quarrel over it now, and perhaps reducing their numbers. The rest of it I entrusted to Jean." The head was lowered again, and Antoinette began busily to fumble with her hands in much confusion. "I fear it was done, in every sense, monsieur, behind your back."

The Sieur de Bonnefois laid his hand on his heart and swept her a profound obeisance. For a moment a shrewd smile played about his handsome features. Then he startled Antoinette with the seriousness of his answer. "I only hope, mademoiselle," he said, with a ring in his voice, "that your pains over my beggarly money will not have cost you a single extra moment of danger. Come!" he ended, taking abrupt command of the expedition, which had suddenly taken on in his eyes something better than a gallant escapade. "I owe something to one who has risked so much for me. Let us on."

As before, they made their way along the passage, but now mounting an occasional stair, and presently they found themselves in the equal

blackness of the outer night. The moon, as Jean remarked with satisfaction, was hidden behind a dense bank of cloud, as if in connivance at their escape.

With the passing centuries Nature had completed what artifice had begun in the concealment of the exit to this secret tunnel. The bushes which originally cloaked it had become tall trees rising from a dense thicket.

So De Bonnefois was moved to exclaim at the maze: "You can't mean there's a way out of this darkness!"

"Dark as the place is, monsieur," the girl answered, "it is darker still with my uncle's deeds."

"Perhaps we had better bring that uncle of yours to account," De Bonnefois countered, grimly.

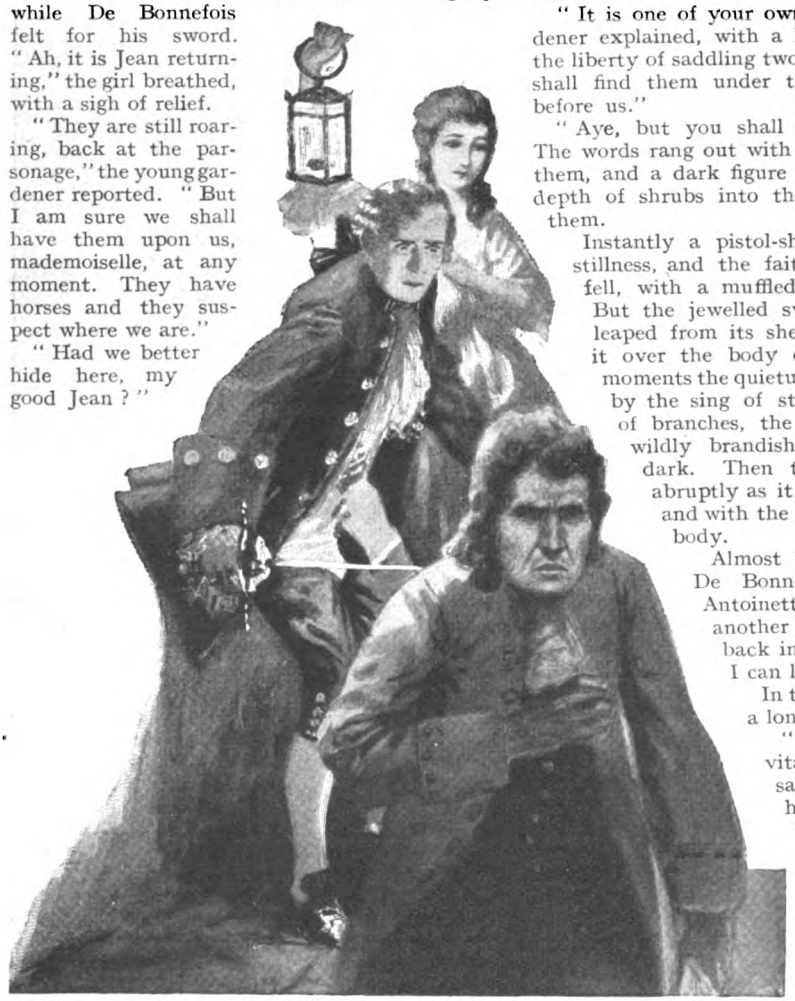
"It is time, monsieur. But hark!"

Jean, this while, had stepped cautiously away into the thicket, to reconnoitre.

For a moment Antoinette listened eagerly, while De Bonnefois felt for his sword. "Ah, it is Jean returning," the girl breathed, with a sigh of relief.

"They are still roaring, back at the parsonage," the young gardener reported. "But I am sure we shall have them upon us, mademoiselle, at any moment. They have horses and they suspect where we are."

"Had we better hide here, my good Jean?"



"THROUGH A LONG, WINDING PASSAGE DE BONNEFOIS SUFFERED HIMSELF TO BE LED, WITH JEAN IN FRONT, AND ANTOINETTE BEHIND HIM WITH A LANTERN."

"That, mademoiselle, would be fatal. I have other plans, if you please. With monsieur's permission, I have hidden his gold in a safe spot. We need to be fleet of foot and to have no burdens. Be so good as to follow me."

Leaving the lanterns behind them, they set out along a scarcely perceptible path through the tangled undergrowth, with Jean in the lead. After him De Bonnefois walked, keeping one hand, for guidance, on the gardener's shoulder, and happy in the fortunate opportunity of holding in the other, equally for guidance, the slim hand of Antoinette. Is it to be wondered at that he gave it an occasional pressure of assurance?

In this way they proceeded for perhaps half a mile, until suddenly the soft whinny of a horse brought them to a pause. As suddenly De Bonnefois detached a hand—the hand on Jean's shoulder, needless to say!—to reach for his steel.

"It is one of your own, monsieur," the gardener explained, with a little laugh. "I took the liberty of saddling two for our own use. We shall find them under the large oak directly before us."

"Aye, but you shall not, my fine birds!" The words rang out with a coarse laugh behind them, and a dark figure leaped from a snarled depth of shrubs into the narrow path before them.

Instantly a pistol-shot broke the night's stillness, and the faithful Jean reeled and fell, with a muffled exclamation of pain. But the jewelled sword of De Bonnefois leaped from its sheath as he sprang with it over the body of Jean. For a few moments the quietude about was disturbed by the sing of steel and the thrashing of branches, the while their assailant wildly brandished his knife in the dark. Then the turmoil ended as abruptly as it had begun, in a groan and with the thud of another falling body.

Almost with the sound of it, De Bonnefois was back at Antoinette's side. "Is there another?" he said. "Press back into the shrubbery till I can look about."

In the distance they heard a long halloa.

"I caught him in the vitals," De Bonnefois said, "but the scoundrel has given the alarm. What of Jean?"

"What of you?" Antoinette asked.

"He never scathed me. But you—we must get you out of this at lightning speed. How about it, man?" He stepped beside the fallen gardener.

But Jean was already rising, ruefully rubbing his head. "He scratched my cheek, the beggar! But I think he startled me more than anything else."

"Are you with us?" De Bonnefois was already hurrying Antoinette before him. With a quick toss he hoisted the slender girl over the body of the fallen man. "Monsieur Jainnes, if I am not mistaken," De Bonnefois commented grimly; "the gentleman who deals in knives. Hurry, my good Jean!"

"Straight ahead, monsieur; I am coming."

The long halloa at the parsonage, a mile away, was answered now by a perfect chorus of hoarse cries, which seemed to come from widely separate points. Some of them were near. After the cries came a clatter of hoofs and the shouts of a confident pursuit.

"The blackguards!" De Bonnefois growled. "To think there be fellow-beings willing to stab in the dark! On, Jean. Take the lead. We follow."

It was the work of a moment to untether the two snorting nags, quivering with excitement.

"Off you go, man!" De Bonnefois gave a hoist to Jean and a slap to his horse. In a twinkling he himself was astride the other. With an arm about Antoinette, he whisked her up behind him, and they were away in the wake of Jean. "Whither away, man?"

"Follow closely," came the answer. "And be ready for a leap."

For a good hundred yards they crashed through the growth; then suddenly the horse ridden by Jean disappeared into a hole. Close after him, De Bonnefois felt his own nag sink under him, and then land with a jolt that almost shook the soft embrace of Antoinette's arms about him.

"It's the sunken road," she said, a little breathlessly. "I should have warned you."

"No matter. The sound of your voice is always apt, Antoinette."

"Follow Jean," she adjured him, but aware, nevertheless, that he had made use of her name.

Free of the shrubbery now, they made little sound except the faint thud of their horses' hoofs in the soft turf of the unused road, and Jean set the pace at a smart gallop.

"How long a ride is it?"

"Perhaps an hour—unless we are stopped. But Jean has told me his plans. You will do well not to take your eye from him."

At the end of ten minutes the young gardener signalled for a halt in order to listen. As nothing was audible except the heavy breathing of the horses, they set on again, although now Jean brought them to a halt more frequently.

The fourth time that he fetched them up, after listening well he motioned De Bonnefois to step his horse beside him. "Do you hear that?" he asked.

"I think it's an owl."

"It is a signal, monsieur. They have guessed our direction, have raced down the road to Féricourt, and have cut in behind us."

Motioning again to De Bonnefois to follow, the gardener now cautiously started on, searching the trees for an opening Presently he found one to his liking and forced his horse into it, with De Bonnefois close in the rear.

"Keep very still," commanded Jean. "And let us pray the horses make no quick start. Do you hear it?"

All three of them heard the stealthy trot of a horse on the soft turf of the sunken road some distance back along the very route they had travelled.

"Get down," the gardener ordered, and all three dismounted.

He tethered the horses to a bush, and made the girl and De Bonnefois crouch down with him at some distance away in the thickest of the shrubbery.

"Even if they hear the horses, they may still not find us," Jean remarked.

Silently they waited. In a few moments the shadowy figure of a man on a panting animal stole past along the sunken road at a quiet trot. They saw his figure silhouetted against the openings in the trees. A few yards beyond he slowed down to a walk. Then he stopped still. A moment more and they heard the low hooting of an owl. A second later came an answering hoot, from a point to their left as they faced Féricourt.

For a space, short in fact but long in seeming, they waited in breathless silence. Then the horse trotted on.

"Good boys!" whispered Jean of the horses. "I feared a whinny in answer to that scoundrel's nag. But they never breathed. You heard, however? The owls? They have now got on ahead of us. Either they will return, discouraged, or we must crawl away from here on our hands and knees until it is safe to make a run for it. I dread the daylight. Hist!" The gardener checked himself.

"It was the barking of a fox," De Bonnefois laughed.

"A signal, monsieur."

Again they held their breath. The woods themselves kept the silence of death in that slightly less inky darkness of a night when the old moon is hidden behind a veil of clouds.

"What do you hear?" De Bonnefois whispered.

"Voices. Listen. If the horses should snort!"

Two more ghostly figures stole along the sunken road, their heads threading the web of leafage a hundred or two hundred yards away. Their talk was loud, but too distant for De Bonnefois to distinguish what they said.

"It means a night of it, monsieur," whispered Jean.

"Will you mind," De Bonnefois turned and whispered, and breathed the name now quite consciously, "Antoinette?"

"Mind?" she answered. "I do not know what may lie before us, monsieur; I do not ask. It will be better than the past—with uncle!"

"Can it be better here——"

"Better here than——"

"Better here—with me?"

Brave enough in deed, Mademoiselle Antoinette was not so hardy in words; but she let De

Bonnefois press her hand in sign of his having guessed her thought.

So for well above an hour longer they waited for some token of the cut-throat band.

De Bonnefois was silent, but not for long. "I forget. I have another dread." He whispered it in Antoinette's ear. "The end of to-night! I'm of use to you now. But after to-night—what of me then?"

"If there is an 'after to-night'! For me, what matter? But for you, monsieur?"

"'Monsieur'! My name is Julien. Do you like it?"

"'Julien de Bonnefois,'" Antoinette slowly tested the syllables. "But to think that I may be the means, perhaps, of bringing that name to an end!"

"It will end, anyway. Unless, Antoinette——"

"Monsieur, if you please," the taciturn gardener again cut in. Again they listened intently, but there was no sound. "I was mistaken," Jean said, simply.

"Ah, well," De Bonnefois resumed his low whisper to Antoinette. "Suppose the name does end to-night. I should have only one more regret. Shall I tell you? It is because I should not have given my name before giving my life, Antoinette——"

She quickly brushed her hand across his lips and pointed to Jean.

"You mean——"

She nodded, and whispered very quietly indeed: "Isn't it plain why he is doing this?"

"He loves you?"

"He has never spoken, but I know."

"And you——"

The pretty head was shaken so that the dark tresses whispered a "No" of their own against De Bonnefois' cheek. "But"—the lips now whispered for themselves—"you must not speak so where he can hear."

De Bonnefois caught up her hand to kiss it, in celebration of so sweet an exhibition of her character. He dropped the hand as suddenly as he had seized it. For a loud snort had burst from one of the horses, and both animals had taken to tearing furiously at their tethers in fright. And instantly, all about them, the woods took on a strange life, with the barking of distant foxes first and then with muffled human calls and orders. Jean leaped to his feet, De Bonnefois quickly following.

For a second they heard the young gardener's rapid breathing; then he spoke in a low and tense voice: "Mademoiselle," he said—and what instinct was it made him address, at that supreme moment for him, the girl and not the man?—"there is only one way out. I will take one of the horses and make all the noise I can. They will follow me, thinking it is all of us together. The moment you think it is safe, monsieur, you will steal away on foot through the wood, after cutting loose the other horse. He, too, will make noise to confuse them. Go straight then to the left. Monsieur's estate is in that direction, perhaps three miles away. Keep silence and you may succeed. May God bless you, mademoiselle!" Jean turned toward the horses.

But De Bonnefois caught his sleeve. "Stay, Jean! It is I who go. Thanks for the plan."

"Monsieur, there is not a moment. I could not defend her as you will." And he tore away.

Already sounds of approach were audible. While De Bonnefois did his best to quiet one horse, the gardener mounted the other and set off, and they heard him coursing through the rough growth with shouts and cries as he sped away, drawing after him, precisely as he had guessed, the full pack of robbers, themselves in full cry.

"It is certain death," Antoinette was saying to herself. "They are too many and too fast. He will never get away. Brave Jean!"

Antoinette had crept to where De Bonnefois stood and now rose ready for his protecting arm. Her eyes, when he kissed them, were brimming. Neither spoke. It was needless. Each knew that a being, humble but a man, had given them to each other.

"Antoinette," De Bonnefois said simply, when they were both better under control, "we have all the rest of our lives for words. Now it is time to act."

"Hark, Julien!" she whispered, quickly. "I heard something stir."

They held still, but all was quiet about them now. Only the leaves made murmur in the first breaths of a light breeze that now bore away the last faint echoes of Jean's bold sally.

"It was the wind you heard," he assured her. "It always springs up at dawn."

"Dawn? It truly has grown lighter. Will that help us, or hinder?"

"By light of day I can handle the cowards. Come, Antoinette. We must not hold cheaply what Jean has given at a high price. We must follow his plan without delay." And he began to fumble with the horse's tether.

"But, Julien," the girl spoke up, "if we are to steal away, shall we not leave the horse where he is? If you release him he will be sure to follow you and draw them after us."

"That is not the first shrewd word I have heard from your lips, my dear. Let us start."

"And hurry! It grows much lighter. They will be able to see us."

"Ah, but then I can also see you!"

His gallantry was about to receive its reward with Antoinette's first kiss. Her lips framed instead a silent "Oh!" and all she could do was to point with a trembling finger.

At the spot she indicated over his shoulder De Bonnefois descried the figure of a man, just emerged from his hiding place behind a tree.

Now, on seeing himself discovered, the man broke into a hard, low laugh. "So, my dear uncle!" a mocking voice said. "My pious uncle! And this is where you pass your nights? In devotion to the vestals of the wood!" And again came the hard, low laugh.

"While you spend yours in the company of thieves and cutthroats!" the retort leaped to De Bonnefois' lips as he recognized the voice of his nephew, De Bray. "Come here, and

pray forgiveness for your insult to this young gentlewoman."

"Or, perhaps, take the wench under my own protection? Along with a bit of your claret?"

Whipping out his steel De Bonnefois made ready to meet the other's impending rush. "Leave, Antoinette! Fly! Hide yourself!" he commanded. "This cur will bark for his crew in a moment."

"Have no fear of that, my pious uncle. I purposely sent the clowns off after your clever knave of a guide, to give him a lacing for his pains; and to give you a lacing myself at my leisure—for the foul words you have spoken against me now and before. I have had report of them in Paris, Monsieur de Bonnefois."

"A lie! What I have to say about you I say to you. And I pronounce you a man between whom and honour there is no acquaintance."

"Being a prudent man"—De Bray took no notice of the taunt—"you perhaps wish to wait for the daylight? I have just heard you speak in praise of it."

"Be done with words, my noble eavesdropper. Come on!"

"The time will wait, I thank you." With cool insolence De Bray stepped nearer and began to doff his leathern hunting jacket, spotting the black-green woodland background, as he did so, with the white of his silken shirt. "Be not a madman, Julien. I have no wish to be a murderer." He so counselled De Bonnefois to copy his example. "You will need all the arms your good God gave you. And"—he began to roll up his sleeves—"I hope your pious soul is shriven."

He stood there, the wan light of early dawn picking out his handsome but evil features. Secure in his victory of a dozen fatal duels, his head tilted high, De Bray smiled as he watched his uncle, so little beyond his own age, scale down to his lace-edged shirt.

"Let us find a spot," he said, in the ever-mocking tone, "where you need be at no disadvantage." And he led the way to the fairly clear space of the sunken road.

De Bonnefois followed. He knew that De Bray, the more brilliant swordsman, would attempt to rush him and finish him early. The somewhat younger man, with trust enough in his great skill, but not such trust in a physique worn down by wild living, must hope for victory in the first few minutes. De Bonnefois was confident, none the less, that, could he save himself for Antoinette in the first few exchanges, he had the great prize of her safety well in his hands.

With heart pounding, the girl herself stole after the two men, keeping behind the trees and scarcely daring to see the deadly encounter upon which so much depended, not for herself alone, but for another.

From the first crossing of their steel it was a furious battle. De Bray fought like a fiend, De Bonnefois as if he were crushing a viper. Made utterly careless by shame and lapse of honour, De Bray opened with a rapidity of play that made his sword look like a fan of swords. In his catlike movements he scarcely touched the turf with his feet. Twice during the first few passes his blade grazed De Bonnefois' throat.

This prospect of a speedy victory fired the young wretch to redoubled energy. His eyes blazed and his lips parted across his white teeth in a devilish grin. Nothing saved the slower De Bonnefois but such a call upon his skill as he had never made before. Often enough he had fought in play; but here a second's slip meant death, and De Bonnefois knew it. Attempting no stroke on his own part, he knew he must place all his skill in the parry, not for his own sake alone but for another. And never before had he so deftly parried. Not even De Bray's bewildering succession of lunges found a single opening in his cool defence. At least, not one was De Bray permitted to find in the first two minutes.

In no time the prancing feet of the two had beaten down a wide circle in the grass. Save for the sing and click of their metal and the quick gasping of their breath, the wood kept almost total silence.

But in a minute more the gasping of De Bray became the more noticeable. De Bonnefois marked it, but not before the young fiend had felt it himself! The early victory had been denied him. And maddened now by De Bonnefois' unexpected skill, dreading to wear down his own wind before he could bear down his opponent's defence, De Bray suddenly changed his tactics. With every resource of evil he fell into craft. His left arm took to weary swinging at his side, in a feigned exhaustion. His feet grew heavy and his body swayed.

Instantly De Bonnefois saw his moment. Not in vain had he parried and waited. And changing now to a furious offence, he bore in upon the other and fairly swept him off his feet. Round and round De Bray backed away as if ready to drop. That he saw his end approaching was stamped on his face.

So plain became its look of distress that De Bonnefois paused, breathless himself, with the cry: "You're finished, Charles! Have done with this foolery!"

He was answered by a shriek from Antoinette.

In a flash De Bray came to life at the moment De Bonnefois lowered his sword. Before the elder man could attempt to defend himself a thin stripe of red appeared under his left arm and began to streak the white of his shirt.

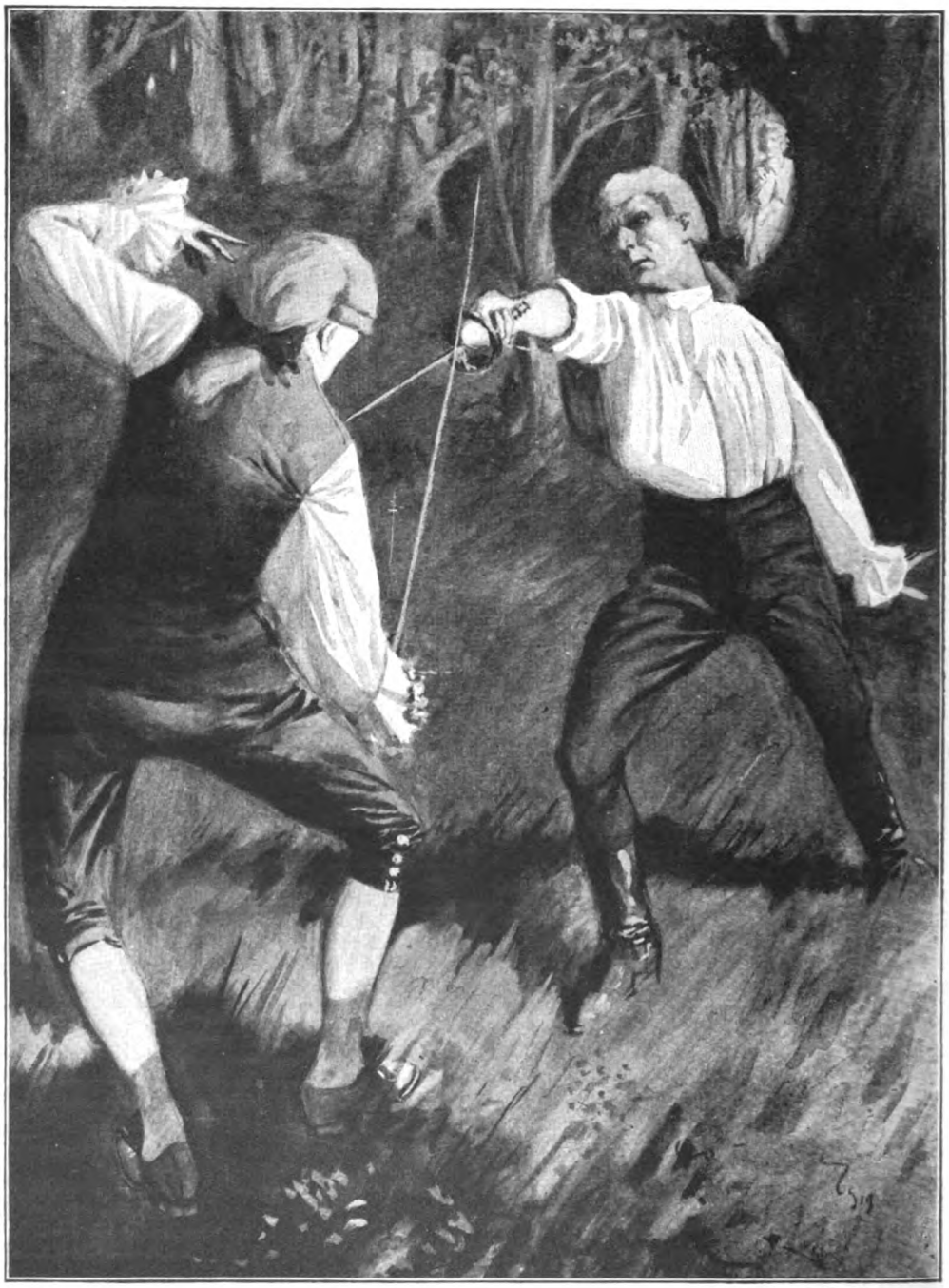
"The blood of the martyr, as I live!" De Bray exulted.

Desperate now and yet hopeful anew, he threw himself into the fray with double his former fury. Victory must come to him in a moment or pass altogether; and, tossing the code to the winds, he plunged in with every trick of the rogue long practised in the wiles of villainy, so that De Bonnefois once cried out:—

"Do you also stab in the back?"

"Anything will do when sticking a pig," De Bray retorted.

Other spots of red appeared over De Bonnefois' heart. So swift were his antagonist's lunges, so snakelike was their coiling delivery, that he could no longer sweep them aside as before.



"OFTEN ENOUGH HE HAD FOUGHT IN PLAY BUT; HERE A MOMENT'S SLIP MEANT DEATH, AND DE BONNEFOIS KNEW IT."

"See!" laughed De Bray as he saw this. "I offer you as a pincushion to the wench."

But the insult to Antoinette and the sting of his wounds brought a change now to De Bonnefois. Something more of the brute arose in him. Till then he had fought with the fine pity that was born in him. Now of a sudden he borrowed the speed of his deadly enemy. Faster than the eye could travel his blade found its way across De Bray's face, and another cry rose from

Antoinette, a cry of a different tenor. The mocking smile had disappeared from De Bray's lips, and in its place grew a ghastly and bleeding grin.

For an instant De Bray reeled, more in surprise than in pain. Then what had been merely a rage before became an insanity of hatred. With the cry of a wild animal from his tattered lips he bore in, and again and again he picked a new spot of red on De Bonnefois' breast.

"Aha!" he soon shouted. "Come, priest! The last rites for the Sieur de Bonnefois! And a slice of his fortune!" he tried to say; but the words were barely intelligible.

Breath was failing him. The keen eye was dulling, and the drink-soaked brain was bidding adieu to its craft. One last supreme effort De Bray seemed to summon from his tiring arm, yet it was less De Bonnefois' thrust than that De Bray plunged blindly against his steel. In a trice the younger man was reeling away with a second fiery gash across his face in the gathering dread of his first defeat.

Again he turned and rather fell than rushed forward. And again, with real victory in sight, De Bonnefois would have stayed himself, all fire and wrath though he now was. But the impulse of mercy had come too late. The order had gone forth from his brain, and this time his blade flicked its way across De Bray's throat. A crimson cascade poured down the young fiend's breast, as the evil heart within, as if in confession, heaved out its hot contents.

And yet again came Antoinette's cry, and another: "Julien! Fly! Come with me!"

De Bonnefois failed to hear it. A strange ringing was in his ears, a strange weariness in his limbs. In vain he tried to push her away from his reeking shirt as she rushed to him, pointing wildly across the wood.

In the distance a great shouting and clatter had arisen. Shots were fired and, amid the galloping of horses, Antoinette distinctly heard the fall of one or two of them in a great crash. There was no mistaking it. The blackguard band of De Bray were flying back to his rescue.

Side by side they stood there, De Bonnefois and she, with their backs to the nearest tree, and awaited the onset. Not a moment had been left them to hide themselves.

There, rounding a coppiced corner in the sunken road they came, the flying figure of her uncle in the lead, his face uglier than ever and almost bursting with blood in his straining endeavour. Feebly De Bonnefois raised his sword, to strike as he might in defence.

But the flying band fled on! Over the fallen figure of De Bray they leaped their horses, till one of them kicked it aside. Only the last man in the string, seeing the bewildered Antoinette and her companion and mistaking them for two of the criminal crew, shouted a needless warning and sped on.

"The King's constables! The King's constables are after us all!"

A little later six of the Sieur de Bonnefois' servants, having heard the wild alarm, set out in search of their master, and presently found him, in a swoon on the ground from his great weakness, his wounds strangely bound up in feminine linen and his white face pillowed on the bosom of a weeping girl.

Some paces away lay a lifeless figure, his handsome but haunted face dotting the centre of a circle of red on the grass.

So they carried the Sieur de Bonnefois, as Mademoiselle Antoinette commanded, back to her former dwelling; and there for some days he lay in a delirium, fighting over and over the contest in her defence.

But towards the close of the sixth day, about sundown, it was seen that he opened his eyes and that the haze had left them.

And when he saw Antoinette he was heard to whisper: "Ah, then you are safe! But De Bray? And where am I?"

And so it was that she told him of the recent past, of his recovery, and of the just punishment meted out to the renegades.

So also, as she finished, De Bonnefois told her of the future.

Thus it was that the ancient parsonage fell altogether now into decay. So it was likewise the reason why the manor of the Sieur de Bonnefois after all acquired a gracious mistress. Neither is it a mystery why, after a time, when an heir came to fill their halls with brave shouts and merry laughter, the Sieur and Madame de Bonnefois chose for him the homely name of Jean.

SOLUTIONS TO LAST MONTH'S CHESS PROBLEMS.

TWO-MOVER.—Key: 1. K to K 6; mate follows after knight moves.

THREE-MOVER.—1. Q to R 4, 1. K takes B (*a*); 2. Kt to B 5, ch., 2. Any; 3. Q to K 4, mate. (*a*) 1. K to K 5; 2. Kt to B 2, dis.ch., 2. K. any; 3. Q mates. The Kt makes a circular tour according to Black's moves.

Nightingales on Toast

by

KEBLE HOWARD

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBIN

I.

MR. RICHARD GOLDY had perched himself, this Sunday evening in midsummer, on a certain stile that you have to climb if you take the footpath-way from Much Martindale to Little Martindale.

Young Mr. Goldy was a very enviable fellow. To begin with, he had come through the war with hardly a scratch and the Military Cross. That, in itself, would have been a start in life. But Fortune had showered him with favours from the very moment of his birth.

Richard had been a fine baby, and was now a very splendid young man. He had curly brown hair, and large brown eyes, and a straight nose, and straight legs. His smile was sunny, and his manner affable. He could chaff you, flirt you, dance you, cajole you with more hope of success than any other demobilized hero within a radius of four miles.

More than all, he was the only son—indeed, the only child—of old Goldy. Old Goldy was not only a doting parent, he was "warm"—in the financial sense. If you wanted to buy an estate or a farm, or even a cottage, you went to old Goldy; if you wished to sell, once again you relied on old Goldy. Old Goldy, in short, had the district in his pocket, and his name had come to be a household word in Much Martindale, Little Martindale, and a score of neighbouring villages. You will easily understand, therefore, that the girls of the district smiled with uncommon sweetness on Richard Goldy.

"Here they come," said Richard, and strolled a little way from the stile. He was not exactly lurking, and yet there was something a trifle furtive in his manner. Any young man who has ever waited by a stile on the chance of meeting an extremely pretty girl will know precisely how he felt, and anybody of either sex who has ever observed a young man under such conditions will know precisely how he looked.

She was not in the first group, which was a party of laughing country-girls, enjoying the reaction that often follows evening service. Nor was she in the second group, a family party; nor in the third group, a band of larrikins whistling after the receding girls. Petunia was alone; she sang softly to herself as she savoured the mingled scent of the honeysuckle and the dog-roses and the deep meadow-grass.

Richard, stepping forward, raised his hat in a very gallant and fascinating manner. "Good evening, Miss Vale," said he.

Petunia, who had espied him some distance off, gave a slight and quite creditable little jump. "Oh! good evening, Mr. Goldy."

"What a perfect evening, isn't it?"

"Delicious!"

"You've been to service at Much Martindale, I see."

"Yes."

She had arrived at the stile, which was rather a high one. Nothing, if you were alone, but quite something if a handsome young man was devouring you with hungry eyes.

"I thought you would. In fact, I saw you start."

"Really?" And Petunia smiled. That smile sent all the blood to young Richard's head. For the matter of that, it had sent the blood to the head of every eligible man in Little Martindale—and a few, possibly, who were not eligible, being already married. But that was their affair, and they have nothing to do with this story.

"Yes," confirmed Richard, caring not a fig for paternal scruples. The girl might be poor, but she was a darling. She might be nothing more than a "companion," but what of it? (Well, we shall see what of it.) "To tell the truth," he continued, as drunk as a young man can be on love and the magic of a June evening, "I came along here on purpose to meet you."

"That was very kind of you," said Petunia,

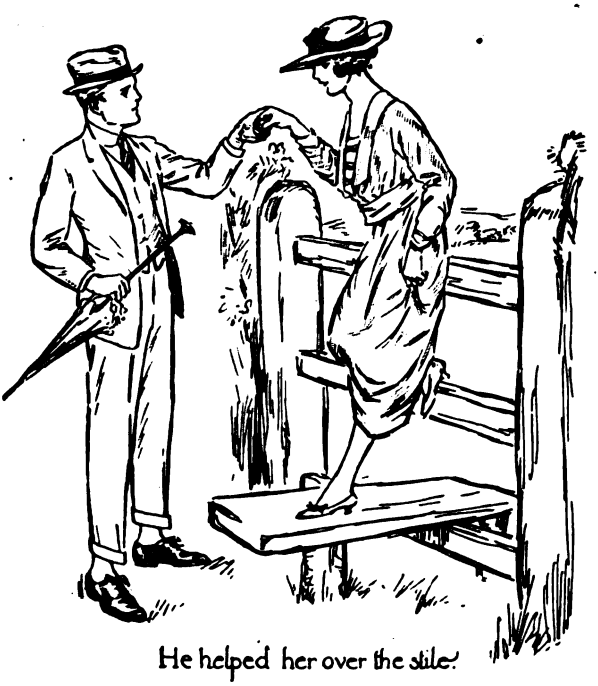
and looked for a moment at his flushed and eager face. She then dug up a quite useful stone with the ferrule of her parasol.

"I didn't come out of kindness, Miss Vale. At least, I feel—well, that isn't the word. I came because I—I wanted to tell you something."

"Perhaps you'd better not tell me," suggested Petunia, gravely.

"I *must* tell you! I've *got* to tell you! I *love* you! Now I've told you!"

Petunia was not particularly agitated. Girls as pretty as all that, even in country places, soon get accustomed to hearing declarations of undying affection. This was the fifth Petunia had received since she came to Little Martindale. There had been Mr. Bruff, the farmer; and Mr. Gazely, the curate; and Mr. Pennycook, the lawyer; and Mr. Applegarth, the retired widower. She had declined them, of course, but so gently that all were still hoping.



He helped her over the stile.

She now proceeded to do the same by young Richard. Other girls may be interested to know how Petunia did it. She began by making a considerable pause; that was only due to the importance of the occasion. She then sighed; that showed nice feeling. She next looked at the horizon and said, slowly, "I'm sorry." After that, naturally, she had to wait for her cue.

"Sorry?" repeated Richard. "Does that mean it's no good?"

"I'm afraid not."

"Is this final?"

"I'm afraid so. You see——"

"Yes?" Where there's explanation there's hope.

"You may think me a curious girl, Mr. Goldy, but I have my own ideas about the sort of man I want to marry."

"And he's not a bit like me, eh?"

"I don't say that. But there's one very important—what shall I call it?—qualification which I'm afraid you lack."

"What's that? Richard was puzzled. What in the world did he lack?

"Well, Mr. Goldy, the passion of my life is music. I made up my mind, years ago, that I would never marry a man who was not musical. You may think it silly, but if a man is musical——"

"My dear girl," cried Richard, "I *am* musical! I love music! I can whistle you anything out of 'The Bing Boys' or Gilbert and Sullivan!"

"I'm afraid," replied Petunia, with a grave shake of her pretty little head, "whistling wouldn't do. I like very good whistling, but one would tire of it. You don't happen to play the violin, I suppose, or the piano?"

"No, but I could soon learn."

"I hate to discourage you, Mr. Goldy; but these instruments are most difficult to master. I should want perfection, and few people, however gifted, attain perfection unless they begin as children What a pity you don't sing!"

"Sing? But I do sing! You ought to hear me in my——! Well, you ought to hear me!"

"I *have* heard you, Mr. Goldy."

"You have? When?"

"When I've been passing your house. You have a good, strong voice, but it needs a great deal of training. Your production is all wrong. Oh, forgive me for saying these things. I've no right to!"

"Oh, yes, you have. I say, d'you think if I had some lessons in singing, and practised very hard, you could—you might——?"

"I don't know," pondered Petunia.

"Shall I try? Will you wait a few weeks or a few months, or however long it takes to train a voice? Do, Miss Vale!"

"But it's such a responsibility! It would be awful for me if I put you to all that trouble and expense and then—then——"

"I must take my chance of that. I'm a sportsman, and if I lose I sha'n't grouse. The question is, where can I get lessons? I don't want the whole village to know about it. When I'm fully trained, I'd like to burst on them and take them by surprise. But you know how they chatter in small places."

"Oh, yes. You may rely on me to keep your secret. Now, let me see. I wonder if there's anybody in Much Martindale who gives singing lessons? There ought to be. Why not inquire?"

"I will. I'll go over to-morrow and rout round."

"The rector might know of somebody, or you might try——"

"You leave it to me, Miss Vale. When I'm keen on a thing, I'm a difficult chap to stop. Are you going straight home?"

"Quite," replied Petunia. "Good-night, Mr. Goldy."

"Good-night, Miss Vale." But he helped her over the stile. That was better than nothing.

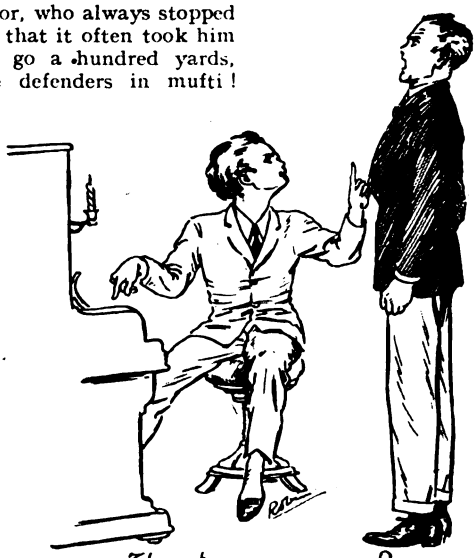
II.

YOUNG RICHARD walked into Much Martindale the very next morning. He was intending to put a discreet inquiry or so at the Blue Swan, but whilst waiting for the magic hour of noon he happened to meet the rector.

"Ah!" cried the rector, who always stopped to talk to everybody, so that it often took him an hour and a half to go a hundred yards, "another of our brave defenders in mufti! Richard Goldy, isn't it? You young fellows grow up so fast I can hardly keep pace with you all!"

They had the usual chat about demobilization, and the disgraceful delay in paying gratuities, and then Richard managed to mention the subject of the singing lessons. The rector promptly lit up.

"My dear Goldy, I know the very man, and you'll be doing a charitable act into the bargain. Mr. Trevaldwyn, my organist—that's the teacher for you." The rector lowered his voice. "The poor fellow was hard hit by the war—lost a finger at Ypres—but he plays the organ exquisitely, and I'm told he's remarkably clever at teaching singing. Come along with me and I'll introduce you."



The strenuousness of his efforts to win Petunia.

So they went forthwith to a humble lodging, and the door was opened by a little girl of ten, who ran quickly to fetch Mr. Trevaldwyn. Having introduced Richard, the rector hurried off at a great pace, but pulled up twenty yards away to talk for twenty minutes to the old woman hobbling along with the aid of two sticks.

Mr. Trevaldwyn, before discussing terms or times or anything else whatever, went straight to the piano and struck a note.

"Just sing 'la,'" said he.

"La," sang Richard, rather timorously.

"Don't be afraid of it," exhorted the teacher. "Let the sound come naturally, with the breath. Don't close the throat. I know it makes the voice sound richer, but it's dreadful to the experienced ear. Nothing kills a throat more quickly. Now—once again—please."

"La," sang Richard, more confidently.

"That's better. Your ear is correct, Mr. Goldy, and you have a voice, but you know nothing at all about using it. Pardon my frankness. Do you ever sing in public?"

"Oh, well, only at village concerts."

"Quite. Let me advise you not to sing at any concerts or anywhere else until I've had a go at you. You'll only injure your voice besides doing yourself an injustice. Now, what time would you find most convenient?"

"I can arrange my time to suit your other engagements."

"That's most obliging of you. As a matter of fact, I'm fairly busy with private teaching—far busier than I ever expected to be."

"Really? May I ask if you have any other pupils from Little Martindale?"

"Well, yes, I have. But they particularly asked me not to mention the fact."

"Indeed? Would it be a breach of confidence if you told me whether they were ladies or gentlemen?"

"I don't think so. They're all gentlemen."

Richard Goldy saw, in a flash, the perilous position in which he was placed. He was fairly certain that Bruff and Gazely and Pennycook and Applegarth had all tried their luck with Petunia. She must have made the same reply to each of them, with the result that the whole bunch had submitted themselves secretly to Mr. Trevaldwyn!

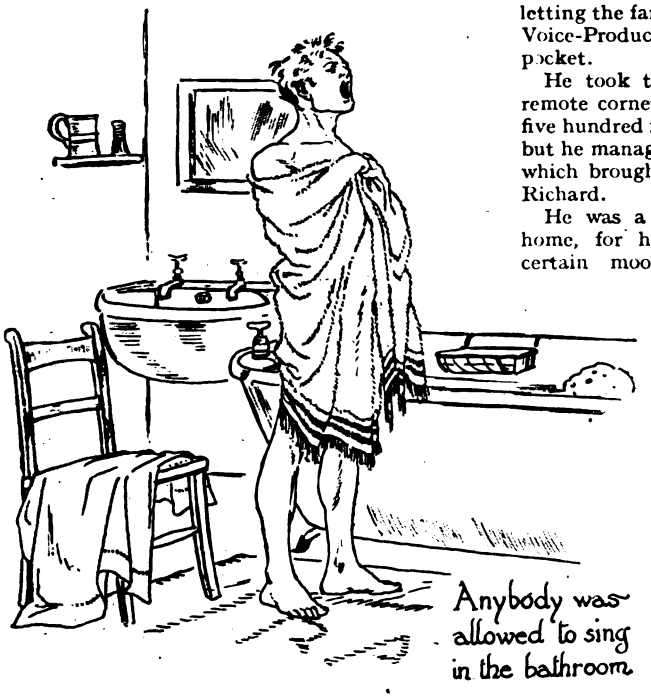
Hastily, he estimated their chances. Bruff could roar like the Bull of Basan, but he would never sing. Young Richard ticked *him* off. Gazely, the curate, had a nice light tenor—a bit throaty, perhaps, but the organist was the man to cure him of that. Yes, Gazely would be a strong rival. Pennycook had a voice like a corncrake, and Applegarth, anyway, was too old. So it came to a contest between himself and Gazely. True, he was better off than Gazely, but Miss Vale was not the girl to be influenced by sordid considerations.

"I'll take the full course, Mr. Trevaldwyn, and I'd like to begin at once. Please treat the matter as quite confidential. Now, what is the earliest date by which I might venture to—well, to sing in public?"

"If you practise hard, Mr. Goldy, and follow my instructions very carefully, I should like you to appear at my concert in about ten weeks' time."

"Your concert? You're giving a concert?"

"Yes. I want to let the town see what my pupils can do. The rector has very kindly promised me the parish hall, and I hope to make



quite a night of it. One or two of my Army pals are coming down from town—professionals, of course."

"By Jove, I could never stand up to that!"

"Oh, we shall work wonders with your voice in ten weeks. I won't let you appear, you may be sure, unless I think you'll do me credit."

"Might I ask if any of your—er—other pupils from Little Martindale will sing at the concert?"

"I certainly hope so. About one I am confident; the others are not so promising at present."

Gazely! Gazely was the fellow! He would be on the platform, in his long black coat and his nice white collar and his angelic smile and smooth fair hair. Women always went crazy about curates, and if they could intone——!

"Right!" cried young Richard. "I'll have a shot! Let's start now! Give me half an hour—twenty minutes—anything you can spare!"

"Very well. We'll begin on that breathing."

So Mr. Trevaldwyn sat down to the piano, and Richard stood beside him, and the stuffed birds fluttered with the strenuousness of his efforts to win Petunia.

"Take it easily," said Mr. Trevaldwyn. "Go quietly, and let the sound come of itself. Inflate the diaphragm. Don't catch at your breath. Don't be jerky. Think of your throat as the pipe of an organ. Now, once again the scale."

"La—la—la—la—*la*—*la*—LA—LA!" yelled young Richard.

After half an hour of it he was quite ready for the Blue Swan, but he caught sight of Bruff in the bar-parlour, and wouldn't run the risk of letting the farmer see the "Manual of Elementary Voice-Production" which was sticking out of his pocket.

He took to the fields instead, and found a remote corner, and competed with a lark about five hundred feet up. The lark had no "Manual," but he managed to fly and sing at the same time, which brought a scowl to the features of young Richard.

He was a little shy about singing scales at home, for his father had a satirical turn in certain moods. But Richard got over the difficulty by taking a bath. Anybody was allowed to sing in the bathroom, and the bare walls and resonant bath flattered the voice, which, incidentally, is the reason why bathrooms are so popular for matutinal vocalizations.

There was no bathroom, luckily, in the cottage where Gazely lodged; the curate had to be content with a tub. But Richard often met the fellow on the foot-path-way to Much Martindale, and Gazely kept up his visits all the ten weeks. Bruff always had used the pathway; but then Bruff, as we know, had other attractions in the little town. As for Pennycook and Applegarth, they fell off at the end of the first month. Applegarth, out of revenge, married his housekeeper, and Pennycook, possibly from a similar motive, devoted the evening hours to his clients' accounts.

To each man his own particular anodyne.

III.

THE evening of the concert in the parish hall arrived at last, and Richard was going to sing "The Yeoman's Wedding." The title was significant; he would look at Petunia nearly all the time. As for Mr. Gazely, he had set his heart on "Abide with me," but the organist had dissuaded him. "Songs of Araby" was his next choice; Mr. Trevaldwyn, however, could not guarantee the high, sustained note at the finish. The ultimate selection was "Come into the Garden, Maud."

"After all," reflected the little curate, "I often *am* at the gate alone. Rather a pathetic touch. If I break down, she will attribute it to emotion." For the fortieth time, and with trembling fingers, he brushed the smooth, fair hair.

Young Richard felt fairly confident. He had worked hard—somewhat to the detriment of the bathroom ceiling—and Mr. Trevaldwyn was pleased. But Richard was not the man to leave a stone unturned. He had been brought up to believe in the power of the purse, and he intended that the purse should stand him in good stead on this fateful occasion.

So he bought quite a lot of tickets—some from Mr. Trevaldwyn and some from the rector and some from the post-office, and some from the

local gentleman who had printed them. They were not all for the reserved seats. A goodly proportion were shilling tickets, and these carried with them, so generous was young Richard, a coupon for a pint of the best ale obtainable from the Blue Swan.

The rector took the chair, of course, and Mr. Trevaldwyn himself opened the programme with a pianoforte solo. It was a little above the musical intelligence of the audience, but they liked it all the better for that, and the item was a great success.

Young Richard's supporters had not yet arrived, but Petunia was there in pale blue. If I have not mentioned that her eyes also were blue, that is an oversight. Anyhow, they were, and the rest of the delightful picture she presented you can easily imagine for yourself. She appeared to be alone, which did not enhance her popularity with the mothers of Much Martindale. Companion, eh? Something fishy about her, you might be pretty certain!

Mr. Gazely was third on the programme. His hair was all right at last, but the stupid music would not keep still. The room must be cold. Perhaps he was in for a bout of influenza! Never mind. The black, black night had by no means flown, and he intended to invite "Maud" into the garden if it laid him up for a month!

The little man got on better than Richard had expected. Curates were always popular, and Mr. Trevaldwyn, at the piano, nursed him through the dangerous places. Still, there was no particular reason why Miss Vale should have clapped her hands so cordially. Richard noticed this through a hole in the screen, and so did other people in the audience. "*Might have known,*" hissed the other people, under cover of the applause.

There was no encore. The curate had his second song ready, but the applause just stopped a moment too soon. His hands and limbs had stopped shaking, which proved that the room was now warmer.

Richard came on seventh. He took the stage with a rather careless air, one white-gloved hand in the pocket of his faultless dress-trousers. Applause. He raised his eyebrows, smiled, and bowed to Petunia. She had not applauded at present, but gave him a pretty little nod of encouragement. "*See that?*" hissed the other people. "*She's after the lot!*"

Richard cleared his throat and stepped forward. More applause. The pints were doing their work. Gaining confidence, he imagined himself in the bathroom and let them have it. It was a hearty rendering—just the thing for a country audience. Besides, he looked so "nice." Not the slightest doubt about the encore. On the advice of his tutor, he abandoned "The Admiral's Broom," and gave them the last verse of "The Yeoman's Wedding" again. Much fluttering of hearts. Mr. Gazely perceived that the room had grown chilly again. Draught somewhere.

IV.

THE concert was over and the audience filing out of the parish room into official twilight. They found Mr. Gazely on one side of the main exit and Richard Goldy on the other. The curate was all smiles and Richard all frowns. Both expressions meant the same thing—frantic

a little above the musical intelligence of his audience, but they liked it all the better for that

jealousy blended with acute anxiety.

Naturally, they had to be congratulated. It looked as though they were waiting for that, but they were not. They were waiting for Petunia. If the curate saw her home, it would be over Richard's dead body. If Richard saw her home, the curate would keep close behind them all the way. He had his own opinion of the Army.

But Petunia did not come. The caretaker was putting out the lights.

"Well," said the curate, "I'll wish you good night, Mr. Goldy."

"Good night," barked Richard.

The curate walked smartly down the street, turned to the left, doubled on his tracks, and tip-toed nimbly to the door of the little room at the back of the hall. Mr. Goldy was already there. He had taken a short cut through the main building.

"Well, really!" ejaculated the curate.

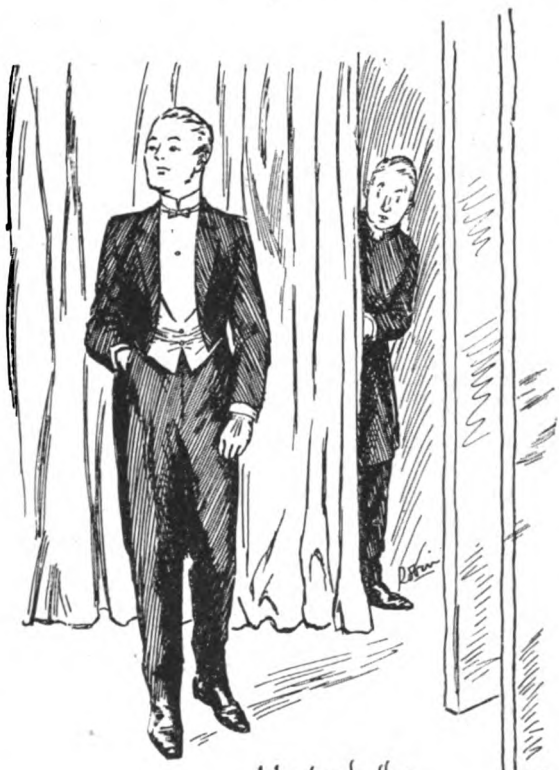
"She's in there," whispered Richard, hoarsely. (It *might* have been the night air on an inflamed throat.)

"In where?" gasped the curate.

"In this room—with Trevaldwyn. I saw their shadows on the blind."

"I didn't know she knew him."

"Nor I. But she does—rather well. Look!"



He took the stage with a rather careless air——

The shadows came again on the yellow blind.

There was no mistaking those silhouetted profiles. His looked down and hers looked up. Their noses drew nearer and nearer. The curate could hardly breathe. Richard, quite unconsciously, was snorting.

The noses missed each other by a miracle, but the lips made a better shot of it. The curate, trembling like an aspen, clutched at Richard for support.

"This is no p-place for us!" he whispered.

"One moment!"

The profiles had separated a little, and Petunia was speaking. The door must have been slightly ajar, for her voice came quite clearly through the still night air.

"I did it all for you, Arthur."

"My clever, beautiful——"

"Love had to find a way, Arthur."

"It has, my adored! Thanks to you and your good friends and the proceeds of the concert, we shall be able to furnish our little cottage."

"Oh, Arthur!"

"My own Petunia!" And the lips made another excellent shot.

"Well, I *am*——!" gurgled Richard.

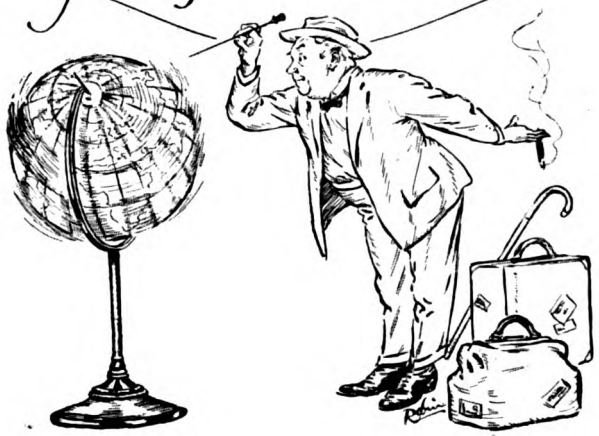
"Hush! Oh, hush!" implored the curate.

And they twain stole silently over the deserted fields to Little Martindale.

She's after the lot!

SELECTING a HOLIDAY GROUND

by Hayden Church



Why a middle-aged Brewer set out for the Vale of Cashmere—the Queerest Way ever invented of choosing a Place for a Holiday.

AT one of the most famous of the London Service clubs, a few evenings ago, the talk turned on the subject of holidays, to which so many of our fighting-men are now looking forward. Various methods of deciding upon the scene of one's pleasuring were discussed, and, apropos, a naval officer whose name is renowned told this odd story.

"The queerest way I ever heard of to pick out a spot in which to make holiday," said he, "was disclosed through a chance conversation with a fellow-passenger, a middle-aged American, whom I met on my last trip to the East. Our talk revealed him to be a brewer, whose home was in Milwaukee, in the State of Wisconsin, where more beer is produced, and drunk, than, in all probability, any other part of the United States.

"Having made his pile, he was on his travels, and when I inquired his destination he calmly gave me the surprising answer that he was on his way to the Vale of Cashmere. Now, pleasure trips on the part of elderly American brewers to the Vale of Cashmere are rare, to put it mildly, and I was fain to express my astonishment, and to inquire why on earth he was going there. He answered, still in a perfectly matter-of-fact way, that he was proceeding to Cashmere for a six months' holiday; and then went on to tell me of the astonishing process which had resulted in his starting off thither—from Milwaukee, Wis.!

"It appeared that, having got his brewing business into such a settled condition of prosperity that it would more or less 'run itself,' and desiring to see something of the world before he 'pegged out,' as he put it, he had made up his mind, some years previously, to treat himself to six months' complete holiday once every two years.

"This is how he decided on where he would spend that holiday. In his home in Milwaukee he had a big turnable globe of the earth's surface. A few weeks before he was ready to embark upon the first of the vacations upon which he had decided he repaired to his library, where he kept this globe, and carried with him one of his wife's hatpins. This was his plan. He had decided to give the globe a spin and, as it was making its revolutions, to stab it with a hatpin haphazard. Wherever upon the earth's surface the point of the hatpin happened to penetrate,

there, he had made up his mind, should his six months' holiday be spent. Unless, of course, he happened to 'jab' into one of the oceans, in which case he would allow himself another try!

"Curious to relate, the first time he put his idea into practice, the place he 'jabbed' proved to be the oddly-named American city of Kalamazoo, Michigan, whence come so many of our roll-top desks and carpet-sweepers. Michigan, be it explained, is in the very next State to the brewer's own native one of Wisconsin, and the journey from Milwaukee to Kalamazoo is only one of a few hours by steamer across Lake Michigan, which separates the two States. The brewer had been to Kalamazoo, as he said, 'time and again.' Nevertheless, as he had decided to spend his holiday wherever the pin-point went in, he journeyed to Kalamazoo, and duly made holiday there for six months. 'Had a bully time, too,' he declared.

"Two years later, when another of his vacations was nearly due, he repeated the amazing process, this time jabbing the point of the hatpin squarely in the centre of the Vale of Cashmere. I imagine that his ideas regarding this classic region, one of the loveliest on earth, were as vague, at the outset, as one would expect those of a Milwaukee brewer to be. In the interval, however, he had read everything that he could lay hands on about the famous Vale, and was enthusiastic about the six months he intended to spend there.

"As a matter of fact, I envied him the experience, for the Vale of Cashmere, as I happen to know through having once passed a year there, is absolutely top-hole. Nothing can well exceed its fertile beauty, or the charm of its climate. It is almost surrounded by snow-capped mountains, the lower slopes of which descend in gentle slopes to the level of the valley. Avenues of poplars line the banks of the River Jhelum, which winds through the valley, and the canals lend to the scenery a peculiar grace which is quite distinctive of Cashmere. The peculiar design which marks all Cashmere ware, notably its shawl-weaving and lacquer work, is said to be derived from the graceful curves of the Jhelum as viewed from the summit of the Takht-i-Suliman, a well-known hill that overlooks the city of Srinagar.

"So I imagine," concluded the officer, "that my brewer enjoyed to the full his holiday in Cashmere, and that he had wonderful things to tell them when he got back to his native Milwaukee. I often think of him, and wonder where the 'jabs' of his hatpin ordained that he should spend the rest of his amazing holidays."

Result of Prize Competition for Novel-Readers.

The following is a list of the Characters from Well-Known Novels which readers were asked to identify:—

1. Nick Radcliffe (*The Way of an Eagle*). 2. Captain Kettle (*Adventures of Captain Kettle*). 3. Raffles (*Raffles*). 4. Sir Willoughby Patterne (*The Egoist*). 5. Barabbas (*Barabbas*). 6. Svengali (*Trilby*). 7. John Silver (*Treasure Island*). 8. Ayesha (or She) (*She*). 9. Lord Fauntleroy (*Little Lord Fauntleroy*). 10. Kim (*Kim*). 11. Ishmael Ameer (or the White Prophet) (*The White Prophet*). 12. Dicky Lestrange (*Blue Lagoon*). 13. Gabriel Oak (*Far from the Madding Crowd*). 14. Jane Eyre (*Jane Eyre*). 15. Sir Percy Blakeney (or the Scarlet Pimpernel) (*Scarlet Pimpernel*). 16. Quinney (*Quinney's*). 17. The Dop Doctor (or Owen Saxham) (*Dop Doctor*). 18. Amelia (*Vanity Fair*). 19. Uncle Tom (*Uncle Tom's Cabin*). 20. Gavin Dishart (or the Little Minister) (*Little Minister*). 21. Bella Donna (or Mrs. Chepstow or Mrs. Ruby Armine) (*Bella Donna*). 22. Kipps (*Kipps*). 23. Monsieur Beaucaire (*Monsieur Beaucaire*). 24. Count Fosco (*Woman in White*). 25. Captain Black (or the Iron Pirate) (*Iron Pirate*). 26. Jeanie Deans (*Heart of Midlothian*). 27. Sherlock Holmes (*Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*). 28. The Night Watchman (*Many Cargoes and other Books*) 29. Adam Bede (*Adam Bede*). 30. Pickwick (*Pickwick Papers*).

Although every character was correctly guessed many times over, no one competitor succeeded in naming correctly all the thirty characters, and the best list contained twenty-seven correct answers. This was sent in by

MRS. J. EDWARDS, 20, Greenhill Rd., Moseley, Birmingham,

to whom is awarded the

FIRST PRIZE of £100.

No one sent in lists containing twenty-six or twenty-five correct answers, but eight competitors successfully named twenty-four of the characters. We have therefore decided to divide the remaining **£50** among these eight competitors, each of whom will receive a prize of **£6 5 0**. Their names and addresses are:—

Mrs. F. M. Hewett, Newlyn, Kneller Road, Whitton, Twickenham.
Ernest B. Brett, 72, Cecile Park, Crouch End, London, N.8.
Mrs. H. Moody, Knockroe, Monaghan, Ireland.
Mrs. Frost 34, Herondale Avenue, London, S.W.18.
Miss R. A. Conry, The Hostel, No. 5, Little Portland Street, London, W.1.
Miss Joan Haward, 12, Langholm Crescent, Darlington.
Miss Kathleen Draper, 7, Upperton Gardens, Eastbourne.
Mrs. Ryan, Manfield Vicarage, Darlington.

Johnny's Disappearance.

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

By H. B. CRESWELL.

Illustrated by G. E. Studdy.

THIS story happened when Marytary was going to school. Johnny Peascod was at school too, but he was far away from Marytary because he was at a boarding-school, and did not come home every day before tea as Marytary did. It all began quite early in the morning, long before the milkman came, when Marytary heard someone throwing stones up against the window. She jumped out of bed and rushed to the window; and first of all she did not see anything at all, and then, on the path below, she saw a funny little dwarf all alone by himself in a big hat. Then the dwarf said in a low voice: "Come down, Marytary, and let me in."

Then Marytary knew it was Johnny Peascod all the time, and she thought he was a dwarf because he was wearing such funny baggy clothes and such a large, grown-up hat; so Marytary ran downstairs quietly in her dressing-gown, and opened the front door, and Johnny stepped into the hall and Marytary shut the door.

Now I think it was a most extraordinary thing to happen, for little Johnny's face and hands were black like those of a sweep who sweeps the chimneys. When Marytary looked at him she was so surprised that it made Johnny laugh more and more.

"What's the matter?" said Marytary, "and why are you laughing?"

"It's such a joke; and you should have seen old Blims running," said Johnny; and it made him laugh again, so Marytary laughed too.

"But why have you come like this?" said Marytary, "so early, and in all those funny clothes; and have the holidays begun?"

"No," said Johnny, "the holidays won't begin for weeks and weeks, and these are old Blims' clothes, and it is a secret, and I'll tell you, but you must not tell anybody."

"All right," said Marytary.

"Honour bright?" said Johnny.

"Honour bright," said Marytary.

"Honest Indian?"

"Yes," said Marytary.

"Dying solemn?"

"Yes," said Marytary, and it all meant that Marytary had promised not to tell anyone Johnny's secrets, and it is what boys say at school and Marytary knew what it meant.

"I've run away from school," said Johnny.

"Oh, Johnny!" said Marytary, "you ought not to have done that; it's very, very naughty, because mummy told me."

"MARYTARY THOUGHT HE WAS A DWARF BECAUSE HE WAS WEARING SUCH FUNNY BAGGY CLOTHES AND SUCH A LARGE, GROWN-UP HAT."

"Well, Marytary," said Johnny, "'Old Blims'—and that is the master, and we call him 'Blims' because his eyelids are so red—was going to punish me because I broke the balusters; but I did not mean to, and another boy pushed me; and I said if he punished me I would run away, so he took all my clothes when I was in bed, and then I got up when all the other boys were asleep, and went to Blims' room and took *his* coat and *his* trousers. He folds them up and puts them in his chair, and he does look so funny when he is asleep with a bandage on his moustache and his mouth wide open, and that's why Buck Fenton used to go

"YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN OLD BLIMS COME RUSHING BY AS HARD AS HE COULD GO. HE DID LOOK SO FUNNY."

and put little shavings of soap into it—but he's left the school now. Then I put on the clothes as well as I could, and I took a hat from the hall so that no one would know me, and I think it is Lady Gresham's (and that is the third master); but I made a noise opening the door, because when I got outside there was old Blims with his head out of the window staring down at me, so I ran; and after I had gone a long way I heard old Blims running after me. Old Blims can run like a hare; you can see all the cups he has won in the Blimmery—that's his study, you know."

"But why didn't he catch you then, Johnny?"

"Why," said Johnny, "I crawled through the hedge so that he never saw me. Oh, Marytary! you should have seen him come rushing by as hard as he could go, and he hadn't any coat on, only his shirt and trousers, and he *did* look so funny. And quite soon he came running back again to try and find me in the other direction, and some men laughed at him, and a dog ran at him too, and nearly bit him."

"Oh, Johnny! And what did you do then?"

"Why, I walked across the fields to the railway, and there were a lot of empty coal-trucks, and so I got into one because it was marked, 'Return empty Rudbery,' and walked out here."

"But what are you going to do now?" Marytary asked.

"I am going to hide."

"But where are you going to hide?" said Marytary.

"I am going to hide *here*, and then you can bring me my dinner and tea, and no one will know where I am."

"Oh," said Marytary, "that would be naughty! You should not have run away from school."

"No," said Johnny, "I know I should not have run away from school; and I know that I am naughty; but you have not run away from school, and so you will not be naughty."

"But I shall help you to be naughty, and that will make me naughty too," said Marytary; and I think she was quite right, don't you?

But Johnny said: "You promised honour bright and honest Indian dying solemn, that you would not tell anyone my secret, Marytary; and if you don't hide me it will be just the same as telling, because they will find me and it will be your fault, and I didn't think you would hit a fellow when he is down"—and that is what boys say, and it means that you should not be unkind to anyone who is in trouble.

Now poor Marytary did not know what to do, because, if she did not hide Johnny, he would be found out and punished all through her, and she knew Johnny Peascod would always do anything to help her if she wanted him to.

So at last Marytary said:—

"All right, Johnny, I will hide you as long as I can," but she did not feel happy, because she knew she could not tell her mother what she was doing.

Now where was Marytary going to hide him?

"Hide me in a box," said Johnny.

"But you cannot hide in a box all day long," said Marytary. "I think the best place would be in the box-room, where all the boxes and old furniture are kept."

So they went upstairs ever so quietly, but when they came to the bath-room Johnny went in to wash himself because he was so dirty, and he made the basin all black, and two towels black, and the white paint on the door showed the marks of his black fingers.

Then they went right upstairs to the very top of the house, and Marytary unlocked the door of the box-room, and Johnny said:—

"This is top-hole," and it is what grown-up men say and it means that it could not be nicer.

"You see," said Johnny, "I can make a bed out of the carpets, and a table out of one of the boxes, and this chair is quite comfortable. I can put up the screen, and if anyone comes I shall be behind the screen, and I shall hear them unlock the door and I can get into this big trunk until they go away."

So that was all right.

Then Johnny said, "Oh, do get me some breakfast, Marytary, I am so hungry."

"It will not be breakfast for hours and hours,"

said Marytary, "but I will get you something to eat."

So she went down to the larder, and there was a very nice cutlet with crumbs all over it, but quite cold, that had been left over from dinner the night before; and there was a fine big ham, and it was all covered with brown bread-crumbs too, and it was quite new, and no one had cut it. So Marytary took the cutlet and two nice slices out of the ham, and a big piece of bread, and a cupful of milk that was in a jug with a cloth over it to prevent the flies getting into it, and that was Johnny's breakfast, and he liked it very much because he was so hungry.

Then Marytary locked the door and went down to the bath-room and tried to clean away the black marks Johnny had left, and she did, very nearly, but her mother heard her, and called out: "Are you getting up, Marytary?"

And Marytary said: "Yes, I am just going to," for she really was, but she did not feel at all nice because she could not tell her mother what she was doing.

At breakfast her mother said:—

"You were up very early this morning, Marytary."

And Marytary said: "Yes, mummy," and got very red, because she knew she was hiding something from her mother, but her mother only said:—

"Really! I don't think they ought to cut the ham in the kitchen," because she saw the ham with the two slices cut out. This made Marytary feel not at all nice.

After breakfast Marytary went off to school with her books, and poor Johnny did not get any dinner because Marytary did not come home to dinner and no one knew Johnny was in the box-room. But when Marytary came back she took a lot of bread and butter and cake upstairs for Johnny's tea, but only water for him to drink. And she unlocked the door very quietly and said: "It's only me, Johnny," and she went and looked behind the screen, and Johnny had made himself a lovely little real tent with chairs and boxes piled up and a carpet spread over, and inside there was a nice bed made of carpet and a mattress with the stuffing coming out. But Johnny was not in the tent!

So Marytary looked in the trunk, but Johnny was not there, and she was just going out when she heard Johnny whistle, so then she knew he was hiding. She hunted everywhere, and at last Johnny's hand came up out of a mattress that was rolled up and standing on its end. Johnny had got in at the top and slipped in legs first and wriggled himself down, so that no one could find him. But Marytary could not wait; she had to go downstairs to her own tea because someone might ask where she was, and come and look for her.

Now, as her mother was out, Marytary thought she would like to have her tea in the kitchen with Jane, for a treat. And Jane was not at all cheerful, but ate her bread and butter without saying a single word except when Marytary asked her a question.

So Marytary said: "What is the matter, Jane? You look as if you wanted to cry."

"Well, miss," said Jane, "I am not a crying one, but if I was I should be likely to be crying now."

"Why, what's the matter, Jane?"

"Why, miss, it's like this. Your mother says quite serious to me, 'I don t like to see things helped in the kitchen before they come to the table,' and I says, 'No, of course, not'; and your mother says, 'Well, please remember it, Jane,' and I did not say anything, but afterwards I went and gave warning. I don't like being spoke to like that, and if your mother thinks I could do such a thing, she might as well tell me to go at once."

"Do you mean that you are going, Jane?"

"Yes, miss."

"Oh, but you mustn't, Jane. It was the ham I cut before breakfast, and mummy thought you had cut it."

"Well, now, you must tell your mother," said Jane, "because I would not have your mother think I had done a thing like that."

"I will tell her soon, Jane, but I cannot tell her now," said Marytary, for she knew that if she *did* tell, her mother would want to know why she cut the ham. Jane could not understand why Marytary should say that she did not want to tell her mother she had cut the ham, so then Marytary told her it was a great secret, and she was to promise not to tell anyone, and Jane promised honour bright, honest Indian, dying solemn, and Marytary told her all about little Johnny Peascod running away from school and how he was hiding up in the box-room.

Then Jane was so pleased, you would not believe; she laughed, and said what a nice young gentleman Master Johnny was, and how she loved him, she did, for being such a little treat.

Now Jane never told anyone about Johnny, and Johnny did not mind when Marytary told him why she had told Jane, and he was very glad next day because Jane brought him a nice breakfast, and she brought him his dinner, too, or he would not have had any, because Marytary was at school. And another thing Jane did was to cut down old Blims' trousers to make them fit Johnny as well as possible, but she could not alter the coat, so she got an old coat of Marytary's, which was like a sailor's coat, with brass buttons, and it made as good a coat for a little boy as for a little girl.

The next afternoon when Marytary was coming home from school, and was quite near her home, she heard Johnny Peascod whistle quite close, out of doors, and she knew it was Johnny Peascod because the way he whistled was different from the way anyone else whistled, and it was a signal to her.

Marytary looked everywhere and could not see him, but the whistling went on, and at last she looked up, and there was little Johnny right up on the roof peeping round behind the big

chimney. Now, did you ever hear of such a thing? Marytary ran quietly up to the box-room, and there was Johnny in his little tent pretending to be asleep. But Marytary said:—

"If you don't promise not to go out on the roof again, I will go down and tell mummy all about it, because it is so dangerous."

So Johnny promised, but he said: "I *must* go out, Marytary. I can't stay here all day."

"But if you go out you will be caught," said Marytary.

"I will go out at night, then, when it is dark."

Did you ever hear of such a thing? I never did, I'm sure.

Marytary had tea with her mummy; and, afterwards, when she was being put to bed, Rose told her that Master Johnny had run away from school, for there was a notice stuck up on a wall in Rudbery, and it said a reward of twenty-five pounds would be given to anyone who would tell where Johnny Peascod was.

And Rose said: "I wish I knew where Master Johnny is. It would be an easy way of earning a tidy little bit. I could do with a tidy bit, I don't think," but Rose never talked like that when Marytary's mummy was there, and I don't think it was a pretty way to speak.

But Marytary did not go to sleep, for she had promised to let Johnny out; and after a long time she got up and went upstairs in her dressing-gown, and she and Johnny crept downstairs, and she let Johnny out very quietly.

It was very early in the morning, before the birds begin to chirp, when Marytary was aroused by Johnny throwing stones up against her window, and she went down and let him in and he looked very tired and was rather muddy. So Marytary asked him what he had been doing, all alone, at night. And he said he had been to the theatre, without paying, by hiding behind a big lady; and then when he came out he saw a man with a shop on wheels and a pony to drag it, who was in the street, and he was selling hot coffee and cake and boiled peas with lots of vinegar and pepper, delicious! And Johnny had helped the man to pour out the coffee and put the vinegar on the peas, so the man gave Johnny some peas for nothing, and when he went home Johnny drove in the shop on wheels with him. After that Johnny met two men who caught a lot of rabbits in little nets that they put in the hedges, until they saw another man, and then they ran away and Johnny had come home, and he was very sleepy, and begged for something to eat because he was very hungry.

So Marytary locked him up in the box-room and then went down to the larder, but she was sleepy, and all she gave Johnny was some cold porridge in an old envelope, and Johnny was cross, and Marytary went back to bed, but she did not sleep because she was so unhappy.

When Marytary went to see Johnny up in the box-room before she went to school, she told him about the notice that Rose had seen posted up on the wall in Rudbery, because she thought it would make Johnny sorry and that he would be a good boy and give himself up.

But Johnny only laughed and said: "Oh, what a lark; do bring one home, Marytary." And Marytary was rather angry because he was so naughty.

When Marytary got into Rudbery she saw the notice stuck up on the walls, and it said: "*Notice.*—Whereas John Fortescue Peascod, aged seven years and two months, has run away from school at High Wycombe House, Bournecombe, at midnight on May 18th last,

"MARYTARY LOOKED UP, AND THERE WAS LITTLE JOHNNY RIGHT UP ON THE ROOF."

now it is declared that a reward of twenty-five pounds will be paid to the person or persons who shall give information which shall lead to the discovery of the said John Fortescue Peascod. In witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands and seals in our own presences while we were present and in the presence of each other while present at the same time, the day month and year herein first above written s'help us, pip, pip, God save the King."

And then there was a photograph of Johnny taken when he was a little long-clothes baby, and it said that he was of a "ruddy complexion" and that "when last seen he was wearing coat and trousers belonging to or previously in the possession of or understood or reputed to be the property of and known to have been worn by the Rev. Whitmarsh Chamberlain Swelterham Williams, M.A., Cantab, and a hat, cap, head covering or 'tile' the property of General Frederick Pinkerton, K.C.D., P.C.F.D., L.P.O.D.K.L., late Commandant of His Majesty's forces at Purnkdorp."

Now Marytary did not know what all this meant, but she understood that twenty-five pounds would be paid to anyone who found Johnny Peascod. When she got home and went, after tea, to see little Johnny, he said:—

"I've got a secret, Marytary."

And Marytary said: "What is it?"

"Why, won't it be a joke! I am going to give myself up to the police, and then I shall get the reward."

"I don't think they would give it to you, Johnny."

"Why not?"

"Because *you* are Johnny Peascod, and you cannot find yourself, because you never lost yourself."

"Well," said Johnny, "*you* go and get the reward, and then you can give it to me."

"No," said Marytary, "you are a horrid little boy. I am not going to tell anybody that I have been hiding you, and you are not to tell anyone either."

"Well," said Johnny, "you must let me out now, and I will go and get the reward."

"But someone will see you and *they* will get the reward."

"No," said Johnny. "I can put this big hat right over my eyes and no one will see my face."

So Marytary let Johnny out, and she was very glad to think that she would not have to hide him any more.

Johnny trotted off, and when he went into the police-station there was only one policeman, and he had not got any helmet on at all, and he was sitting at a desk writing in a great big book, and he had spectacles, so I think he was a very clever policeman.

"I've come," said Johnny, "to get the reward."

"Which reward?" said the policeman, for, you see, there were lots of people lost, and there were lots of rewards to be had if you knew where they were.

"The reward for John Fortescue Peascod," said Johnny, because it said it on the notice.

"That's all very well," said the policeman, "but where is he?"

"I will tell you when you have given me the reward," said Johnny.

"But if I give you the reward," said the policeman, "perhaps it would not be Peascod but someone else you had mistaken for him."

"No," said Johnny. "I know him ever so well, and perhaps if I took you to him you would not give me the reward."

The policeman stared at Johnny and bit his pen for a long time without speaking, and then he got up so suddenly that Johnny thought he was going to put him in prison, because policemen do that sometimes; but he only opened a door and said something, and another policeman came in with his tunic unbuttoned, so I think he was just going to bed; and he had no helmet on either, and he had not any spectacles, but his head was quite bald, so I think he was a clever policeman too.

And the policeman with the spectacles told the policeman with the bald head all that Johnny had said, and they both stared at him. Then the policeman with the bald head said: "Do you know where this person, John Fortescue Peascod, is?"

And Johnny said: "Yes, of course I do."

"Is he in Rudbery?"

And Johnny said: "Yes," because he was Johnny Peascod himself.

"Is it far from here?"

"No," said Johnny, "quite close," because he was there all the time.

Then the policeman with the bald head took a key out of his pocket, and it was fastened to his belt by a chain so that no one could take it away from him, and he unlocked a door all made of iron, and took out a round leather bag as big as a cricket ball, with a big red seal on it, so that you could not open the bag without breaking the seal, and then people would know you had opened it; and he gave the bag to Johnny, and it was so heavy Johnny nearly dropped it because it was full of golden sovereigns, and gold is very heavy indeed.

"Now, my boy," said the policeman, "we will come with you, and if you do not produce Johnny Peascod we will take the reward away again. Where is he?"

"Here," said Johnny.

"What do you mean by 'here,'" asked the policeman in spectacles.

"In this room," said Johnny.

Then both the policemen got very excited.

"Shut the door," cried the one with the bald head, and they began looking under the chairs and tables and in the cupboard and coal-scuttle till the spectacles fell off and the bald head grew pink.

"Johnny Peascod isn't here," they said at last.

"Oh, yes, he is," said Johnny.

"Where is he, then?"

"Here," said Johnny, slapping his chest. "I am Johnny Fortescue Peascod."

Policemen are never surprised at anything, because if they were they would be surprised

many times every day, and would not be able to do their work properly. So they looked at Johnny, and the one with spectacles put them on and said :—

"All right, very good. But you cannot have the reward, because by Act of Parliament no man can be lost to himself, and so he cannot find himself."

But Johnny said : "I am not a man, I am a little boy, and you have already given me the reward, and you said I might keep it if I produced Johnny Peascod, and I have produced him."

Then the policemen talked together and read in a big book to find out what to do.

Then they said : "We do not believe you are John Fortescue Peascod. You will have to find security in a citizen of good repute known to all peoples, and being esteemed in the public knowledge of all men, so help you, pip, pip," because it said it in the book.

"What does that mean?" said Johnny.

But they did not know.

"We want to make sure that you are *really* Johnny Peascod," they said.

"Of course I am," said Johnny; "come home and they will tell you."

So off they started.

As they were going along they went by a post-office, so Johnny asked if he might go in, and then he put all his money into the savings-bank, and that was clever of him, because you cannot get your money out of the savings-bank until you are twenty-one years old, and that is a long time, and no one can take it away.

Now this is not quite the end of the story, because next morning a man, whose hair was a little grey because he was really quite kind all the time, drove up in a cart very quickly to Johnny's house, and it was old Blims—but that was not his real name—and Marytary saw him. And in the afternoon Johnny drove away in another cab with old Blims, and he would not even look at Marytary, and it was because he felt ashamed, so I think that Johhny was a good boy again and was really sorry for what he had done, for he had given great pain and anxiety to lots of grown-up people who loved him, and who dreaded that harm should come to the dear little boy they loved so much.

And the greatest harm that could come to Johnny would be that he should grow up into a big boy who would not respect his masters, and who would run away from school. But Johnny was only a little boy, and he learned to be good. And I am sure he was punished, because he deserved it; but I do not want to know in what way he was punished, because I love him, and I feel very sorry.

"THEN BOTH THE POLICEMEN GOT VERY EXCITED, AND BEGAN LOOKING UNDER THE CHAIRS AND TABLES AND IN THE CUPBOARD AND COAL-SCUTTLE."

And little Marytary felt quite nice and good again, because directly little Johnny went to claim the reward, Marytary told her mother all that she had done; and her mother said she was naughty, but she was not at all angry, and she kissed her and forgave her, and made Marytary feel happy again; and her mother never told anyone what Marytary had done; and Jane—who, of course, did not go, and is still there—never told anyone, so this is the first time that anyone knows where Johnny Peascod hid.

Johnny did not keep the reward, because he did not want to; so he gave it all back, and the savings-bank let him, because it was the right thing to do, and a bank always tries to do what is right.

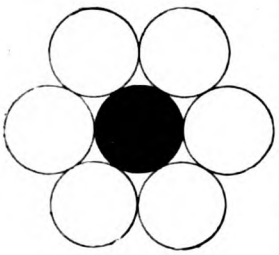
Now this has been a very long story, and it is over at last—but I think it was all very exciting, don't you?

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

467.—THE SIX PENNIES.

I AM reminded that when I presented the "Four Pennies Puzzle" in our issue of February last I promised to give a slightly more difficult variation of the problem later on. Here it is; but it is perhaps easier than it would have been without the publication of its predecessor. Lay six pennies on the table, and then arrange them as shown by the six white circles in the illustration, so that if a seventh penny (the black circle) were produced it could be dropped in the centre and exactly touch each of the six. It is required to get it exact, without any dependence on the eye. In this case you are not allowed to lift any penny off the table—otherwise there would be no puzzle at all—nor can any measuring or marking be employed. You require only the six pennies.



468.—SIR WALTER SCOTT'S ENIGMA.

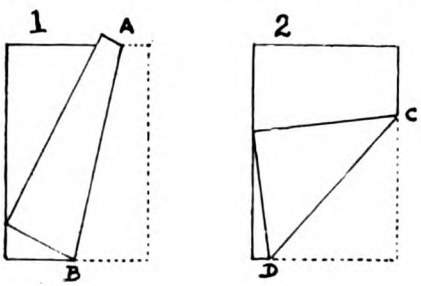
HERE is another of those "unsolved" enigmas that are being frequently sent to me. It is said to be by Sir Walter Scott. I will give next month the best answer that I can find. Perhaps readers can find a better one.

Sir Hilary fought at Agincourt.
Troth! 'twas an awful day.
And though in that wild age of sport
The triflers of the camp and court
Found little time to pray,
'Tis said Sir Hilary muttered there
Two syllables by way of prayer.

The *first* to all the gay and proud
Who see to-morrow's sun;
The *next* with its lone quiet cloud,
To those who meet their dewy shroud
Before the day is done;
The *whole* to those whose bright blue eyes
Weep when a warrior nobly dies.

469.—A CREASE PROBLEM.

FOLD this page, so that the bottom outside corner touches the inside edge and the crease is the shortest possible. That is about as simple a question as we could put, but it will puzzle a good many readers to discover just where to make that fold. I give two examples of folding. It will be seen that the crease A B is considerably longer than C D, but the latter is not the shortest possible.



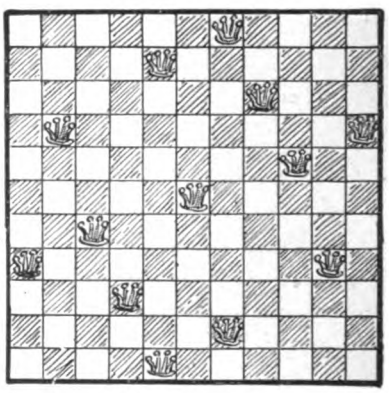
470.—A MONEY PUZZLE.

A MERCHANT noticed the curious fact that when he doubled £6 13s. it became £13 6s.—thus merely exchanging the pounds and the shillings. He tried hard to discover another amount of money that had the same peculiarity, using any multiplier whatever, but failed. Yet there is such another case. Can you find it?

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

463.—THE NINE QUEENS.

THE illustration explains itself. Wherever you mark off a square 9 by 9, the nine queens contained in it will all be free from attack by another queen.



Given last month's diagram, all you had to do was to move every queen one square to the right, except the one that was marked A, which is transferred to a place, one square lower, in the first column.

464.—THE MAN AND THE DOG.

THE dog's speed was 16 miles per hour. I have not space to show the method of working, but the following facts will give the reader clues to the general solution. The distance remaining to be walked side by side with the dog was 81 feet, the fourth power of 3 (for the dog returned four times), and the distance to the end of road was 625 feet, the fourth power of 5. Then the difference between the speeds (in miles per hour) of man and dog (that is, 12) and the sum of the speeds (20) must be in the same ratio, 3 to 5, as is the case.

465.—MISSING WORDS.

THE words are as follows, in their order: Eight bight, light, night, wight, might, right, sight, tight, fight.

466.—SQUARES AND DIGITS.

IF a square number terminates in similar digits those digits must be 4, as in the case of 144, the square of 12. But there cannot be more than three equal digits, and therefore the smallest answer is 1444, the square of 38.

TANKS AMAZING NEW REVELATION by SIR ALBERT STER

GREAT ATLANTIC FLIGHT.
Sir John Alcock, K.B.E., D.S.C., says he found
FRY'S Chocolate indispensable
See Page 22.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Two Splendid Stories

ARTFUL CARDS by W. W. JACOBS

THE REAL TEST by "SAPPER"

September 1919.

— A —
GOOD TURN
When you have read this copy pass it on to a friend.

No. 345
VOL 58

1/- net.

Drawing by Wilton Williams.

Dri-ped Leather's Services.

No. 13.—The Queue Habit.

All the world has stood in queues; buying sugar, butter, meat, matches, has been at times similar to the method of securing a theatre seat; and war-time shortages have engendered a serious habit of "Queue-crawling," which at the same time has had the beneficial effect of demonstrating the remarkable wet-resisting power of "Dri-ped" Sole Leather.

Dri-ped Sole Leather is waterproof, double-wearing, light, and flexible.

READILY OBTAINABLE.—Owing to the cessation of Army requirements, Dri-ped Leather can now be readily obtained. Do not be put off.

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CAUTION.—Insist on Dri-ped Leather soles, but see that the Purple Diamond Trade Mark is stamped every few inches on each sole. Without it, the leather is a substitute.

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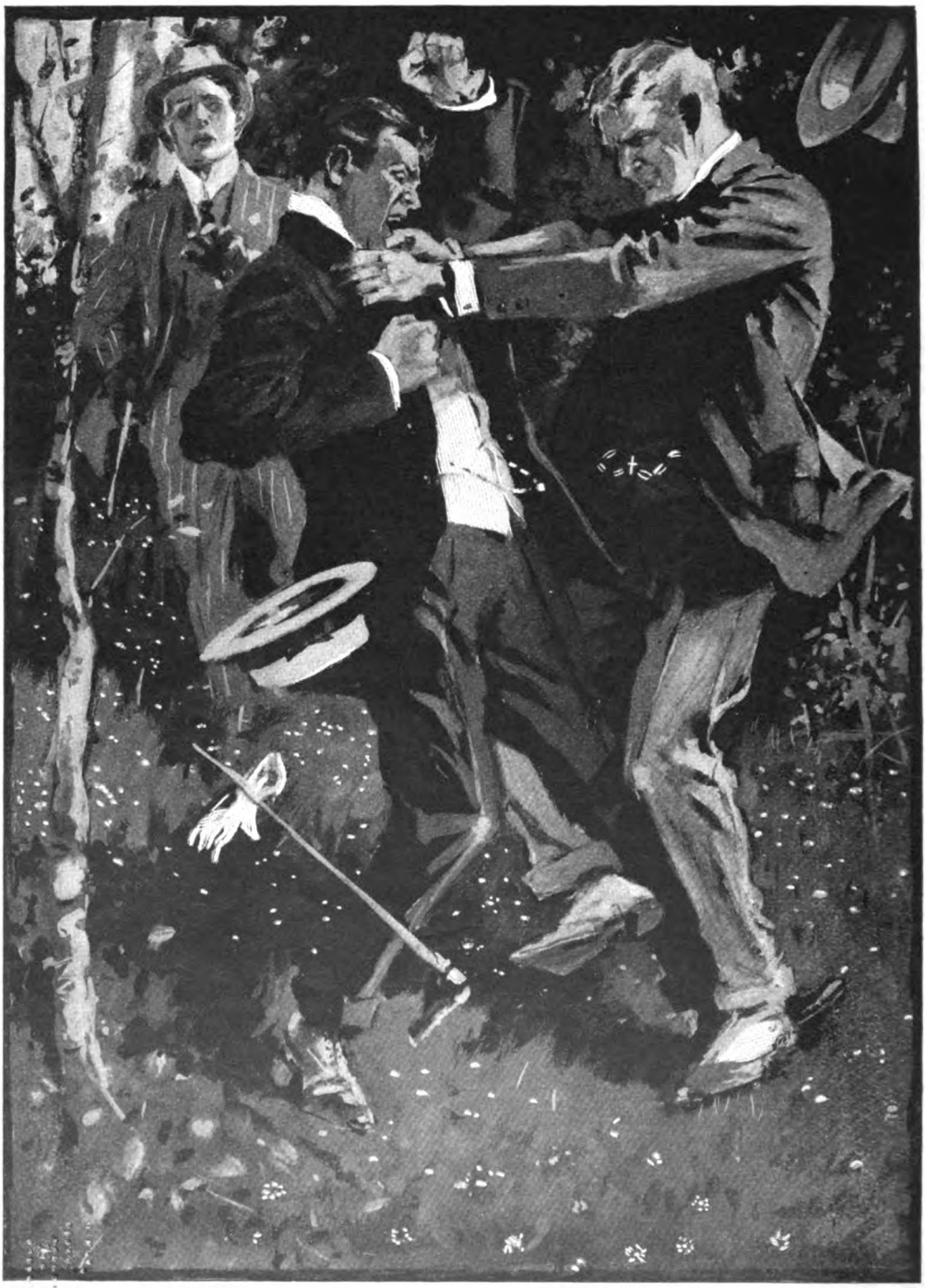

"THERE THEY WERE, CREERY WITH HIS HANDS ROUND HIS ENEMY'S THROAT, AND CARTLETT BEATING HIS CLENCHED FISTS UPON THE OTHER'S ASHEN FACE."

(See page 204.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.
SEPT. 1919. VOL. 58. NO. 345.

The DUEL *in the* COPSE

by L. J. Beeston

Illustrated by W. Dewar

"THAT sort of coil," said the visitor named Sowerby, "is the most infernal nuisance. Yes, and indeed. Every unfortunate concerned gets a splash of the mud, and it doesn't come off at a brush, but may stick for years. I have a most vivid remembrance——"

He checked himself as if interrupted by the band on the lawns before the sea, which had just burst into the Fishermen's Chorus from "Masaniello," but in reality prudence had hinted that he was on marshy ground.

Dinner was over in the Brighton *pension*, and the smoke lounge, which had a balcony commanding the Esplanade, had attracted eight or nine men to its comfortable chairs. Someone had read a paragraph in the evening paper concerning the loss of a London hostess's rope of pearls at a reception, and this had started Sowerby.

"Well, carry on," urged a listener. "You have a vivid——"

"It was at Mrs. Lacey Hatchman's that the horrible thing happened," continued the other, consenting, slowly refilling his pipe. "Of course I am altering names. She was giving a small dance at her house in Bolton Street. During the fifth waltz her partner, a young man named Cartlett, called the lady's attention to the fact that one of her bracelets was becoming unfastened. To avoid interrupting the waltz, Mrs. Hatchman, after slipping off the ornament, reached out as she passed a bronze figure on a pedestal and dropped the bracelet just behind the statue, on the smooth onyx top of the pedestal. She forgot the incident until a couple of hours later, when she discovered that the bracelet was not there.

"Nothing could be more commonplace than this part of my story. The sequel, however, is in the highest degree unusual.

"Was the trinket valuable? Fairly, for the gold circlet had an emerald clasp, and was worth about two hundred pounds; also the owner was attached to it by a strong bond of sentiment. The loss was discovered before the guests departed, although Mrs. Lacey Hatchman tried to keep it dark; it created a most painful sensation.

"The guests left; weeks passed; the bracelet was not forthcoming. One of the company had helped himself, or herself, to it. That was daylight-clear. Someone had committed a despicable action. Which one? For a few hundred pounds a callous and guilty hand had tossed the mire of suspicion over the entire company. It was an abominable thing to occur amongst such a set. Thoroughly appreciate that point. Like a sort of poison vapour, a mephitic gas, suspicion hung about each one of the guests. It might be an impalpable shred, but there it was. Wherever he or she went, the episode of the stolen jewel was scarcely to be alluded to by the diplomatic. No tactless chatterer could mention it and not cause a twinge of mental pain to the party who had been present. It couldn't be said, with an absolute finality, 'Oh, *he* could never have done that shameful thing, for consider his social position!' That couldn't be said, because *every* guest there filled a decent niche in society. Therefore Mrs. Lacey Hatchman was profoundly anxious to have the mystery cleared up. Bitterly she regretted the incautious exclamation which had made her loss known. But it was too late. The mischief had been done. Beyond argument one of her party was a thief.

"A month later I met Cartlett again. He was the only one of Mrs. Hatchman's company I have named. I must now mention another—Oswald Creery. I met them both together.

"It was at a garden party in town, when Colonel Pennent, who was then in Parliament, was entertaining a hundred or so of his constituents. You know those popular affairs—when Brown, Jones, and Robinson receive a card requesting the honour of their company, with wife and daughter. They stroll, delighted, over their member's lawns, consume his refreshments, are introduced to his friends.

"Both Creery and Cartlett turned up. This was by no means because they were tickled by being included in the general invitation. They were on very intimate terms with the Colonel; indeed, both men wished, above all things, to marry Marjorie Pennent, the Colonel's daughter, and the very apple of his eye. And as Marjorie was easily the most beautiful attraction at the garden party, with a charming smile for the very humblest there, you will comprehend why Cartlett and his rival Creery were present. For each other they had no word, and only fierce looks, being on the worst possible terms; but I am coming to that.

"The tree-shadows were growing gigantic under the setting sun when I found myself, in my wanderings round the place, near to a copse of beeches, in a remote corner of the estate. Far behind me I heard the music of a string orchestra which was playing on a balcony, and an occasional peal of laughter. The cool, dim shade of the beeches was inviting, and I was peering for a plank bridge to cross the brook between me and the trees, when the shouted words, 'I say

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that you lie!' rang from the coppice like the crack of a pistol.

"Shocked, I recognized Cartlett's voice, raised in blazing anger. I could not catch a response, but that did not surprise me. Oswald Creery would never descend to shouting. And the other man was most certainly he.

"Ought I to interfere? Only in the last extremity. I found my plank bridge and started to cross it into the little wood.

"I was well aware that the quarrel might end most unpleasantly. I have said that the men both wanted Marjorie Pennent, but that was not the only matter of discord. Both were opposing litigants in a will suit.

"You know what that means. The power to canker, to corrode the heart, which lies in a disputed legacy; the sense of wrong rankling like snake-bite. Now those two men seemed fated to cross each other. They had been mutually hostile for years. So you can understand, at the time of which I am speaking, that they hated each other fairly exhaustively.

"Hated? My word! when I rushed in upon their privacy they had got even beyond that. It was the ominous thud of a blow which sent me forward at a run. There they were, Creery with his hands round his enemy's throat, and Cartlett beating his clenched fists upon the other's ashen face.

"Creery, who looked red murder, let go as I rushed in, and Cartlett reeled back, just about half strangled.

"The banal question, 'Have you gone mad, gentlemen?' flew to my lips. They did not reply to it; they did not even look at me. Breathing hard, hoarsely, they glared at each other, both their faces not a healthy crimson, but pale, pallid as death.

"Creery panted, 'We will settle this some other time.'

"'Now—now!' gasped Cartlett, trembling with concentrated passion.

"'And why not?' I demanded, harshly, keeping between them, looking from one fury to the other. 'But not by insensate violence. Allow me to suggest a far more effectual manner of duel, gentlemen.'

"I spoke, of course, on the impulse of the moment. An extraordinary idea had occurred to me."

The narrator paused at this juncture in his story, dropped his pipe in his pocket, and got up to look down from the balcony, his brows contracted in deep reflection, as if he doubted the wisdom of continuing. With immense *éclat* the band on the lawns finished off the "Masaniello" selection, and the plunge of the sea on the shingle became again audible.

"A quite extraordinary notion," Sowerby repeated at last, wheeling abruptly and dropping into another chair. "Born without seeking, without desire.

"As I addressed them Cartlett treated me to a 'Damn your interference!' glare; but Creery, his lips writhing in a sort of derisive, wicked smile, gave me answer: 'May I ask what the devil you mean?'

"'Simply, gentlemen,' I replied, with emphasis, 'that if you must come to grips—and I admit that it seems an essential—black eyes and bloody noses will not help you. Unfortunately—or the reverse—measured paces and levelled pistols are not permitted to you in this country. Believing, however, that you would unhesitatingly have recourse to them if it were possible—in other words, that each one of you wishes to extinguish the other—I will place before you my proposition.'

"If my words had provoked a laugh I should have known better than to continue; but the two of them, their faces still white and grim, waited for me to go on.

"'Gentlemen, I must in the first place remind you of a painful episode which came near to us all,' I added, impressively. 'I allude to the theft of Mrs. Lacey Hatchman's jewelled bracelet, which still—the mystery uncleared—reflects upon every guest present at that dance, as it is bound to do, and is the cause of even deeper distress to the lady chiefly concerned. Now, what I want to say is this: If the guilty person admitted his wrong—even in a strictly private fashion—it would snap the wretched tension which now exists, would make every guest breathe in a normal and healthy manner, and would roll a big weight of care from Mrs. Lacey Hatchman's mind.'

"When I had said that I paused to note the effect, cautious of proceeding through not being sure how my idea would act upon them. I believe that Creery had a glimmering of it already, for his brows went up, and he fetched the next breath in a little gasp. Not so Cartlett, who flashed on me, with hot impatience: 'What the deuce is this to do with me?'

"'Obviously, the man who stole the bracelet will not own to it,' I continued, watching him carefully.

"'Oh, go to blazes!' he rapped out.

"I went on, steadily, putting aside his fierceness: 'On the other hand, if someone who is perfectly innocent of that unspeakably mean theft chooses, for the sake of the others, to take the guilt upon himself—why, he performs such an act of self-sacrifice as never was, and never will be.'

"At that point Creery burst out: 'God! I get you now; I follow you. You mean that one of us——'

"'Shall own to it—yes,' I interrupted, my eyes still upon Cartlett. 'I suggest that you settle the difference between you, now, here, once and for always, by leaving to pure chance which one of you shall take the burden on his shoulders. You will do it with eyes wide open to the consequences. The loser in this duel will not, indeed, suffer loss of life; he will not be buried with a pistol ball in his head; but he will be almost as effectually and permanently extinguished.'

"Again I paused. Cartlett was staring at me in a wild way, his mouth open, his wits dazed by my proposition.

"'Wiped out, by Heaven!' said Creery.

"'Obliterated,' I added.

"'Run clean through,' continued Creery, with a hard, rasping laugh. I was sure that he would accept the terms, because he took a cigarette from his case and lighted up with studied nonchalance.

"He was brave. Make no mistake about that. Of a good family, he was attached to one of the Embassies in London, and his prospects were roseate. Cartlett was a young barrister, already well up the ladder. To claim the ownership of the crime would mean ugly consequences for either of them. And among those consequences the loss of Marjorie Pennent would go without saying. If they had time to think it over they would turn my proposal down, sure enough; but just now they were white hot with fury and ready for a mad impulse.

"'Cartlett, have you the pluck?' cried his enemy, with a biting sneer.

"Still Cartlett said not a word, but stood with his eyes fixed gloomily upon the ground.

"I continued, with cold deliberation: 'All that is necessary is for me to go to Mrs. Lacey Hatchman and tell her that I am sent by one of you to confess to taking her emerald bracelet. Nothing more will be required. No written admission of guilt will be called for. There is no reason why she should doubt the confession. She will not prosecute, for you are, both of you, her friends. All she wishes to do is to relieve the sufferings of her guests who were present at the dance, and who are so involuntarily implicated in the deplorable affair. Since neither of you gentlemen really did take the jewel it cannot be returned—and she will certainly demand its return. Let that pass. I shall inform her that the confessed culprit sold it in a secret market abroad, and I shall add that I will go after it. Later on I must admit defeat; must say that the jewel has passed through under-currents and vanished.

"'Mrs. Lacey Hatchman will not prosecute—no; but the steps she will follow we can, I feel sure, take for granted. She will not go about announcing publicly the name of the supposed guilty person; but she will whisper it in one or two influential places, with a view to removing from innocent heads the nimbus of suspicion which now crowns them. That will serve her purpose. But you must perceive, in the strongest light, what will happen to the one whose name I take to her. He will be shunned first in that quarter, then in this; he will be dropped here—there. So-and-so set will give him their backs; such-and-such circle will change the subject when his name is mentioned. In plain terms, he takes a dive down below the surface of that society where he has been swimming hitherto, and he will not come up again!'

"'So much the better for the other,' snarled Creery, behind his cigarette smoke. 'Cartlett, are you game?'

"It reminded me of Mercutio's 'Tybalt, will you walk?'

"MRS. HATCHMAN DROPPED THE BRACELET JUST BEHIND THE STATUE."

"THE WHITE COIN HUMMED AS I FLICKED IT HIGH INTO THE AIR."

"Cartlett, whose face was white as milk, whose sombre eyes refused to look up, answered, huskily, 'How do you propose to settle it?'

"'By the spin of a coin,' I answered, taking half a crown from my pocket. 'One of you calls. Head or tail.'

"'Good enough for me,' Creery growled. 'Spin it up. Cartlett, you call. If——'

"'If he is wrong, he loses,' I interrupted, emphatically.

"The white coin hummed as I flicked it high into the air.

"'Head!' exclaimed Cartlett, hoarsely, as the coin started to come down.

"Head it was. Creery looked at it for a second or two, tossed aside his cigarette, turned on his heel, and went off. True metal. Not a whimper; not a curse."

There was a buzz of sensation as the narrator finished. His jaws snapped upon his last sentence, and with dramatic slowness he struck a match for his pipe, which he had withdrawn from his pocket on finishing his story. He leaned back, puffing serenely. Presumably he had concluded.

"And Creery went right through it?" demanded a listener.

"Certainly he went right through it. He had to."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed another.

"One cannot fight duels without getting mauled," said Sowerby, tranquilly. "It was just as real a.live combat as if the men fought with weapons; and, in a way, much more satisfactory. A body left on the ground makes a barbarous business. And then Creery was a man who could adjust himself to circumstances, being a philosopher. He went to one of the colonies, became a farmer there, and is doing rarely well. Don't you worry about Creery."

"But what did the *real* culprit think—whoever he was—when he gathered that an

innocent man had owned up?" demanded a third auditor.

"God only knows," said Sowerby, laconically.

"And that is the end of the story?" asked a fourth man.

"Practically."

"What do you mean—practically?"

The narrator chuckled, silently amused. After a short silence, during which all waited expectantly, he leaned forward, looking at his audience in turn, and said:—

"There *is* a little more to add. Now, suppose you gentlemen call upon your imaginations and guess the rest of my tale? You won't succeed; but try."

He had scarcely put this interesting proposal before one man flashed: "I've got it! Creery turned out to be the real stealer of the bracelet!"

"A too hasty answer; therefore the wrong one. Next!"

There was a longer pause. Suddenly another ventured:—

"Cartlett had it all the time?"

"Bah! Be more original!" scoffed Sowerby.

A longer silence followed this rebuff. It was broken by an eager exclamation.

"Mrs. Lacey Hatchman never really lost the jewel! It was found, later on, by her in her house!"

"Not bad," smiled Sowerby. "A smart theory which, unluckily, has the disadvantage of being quite off the metals. Who's next?"

"You had taken it yourself," beamed another, pleasantly.

There was a roar of laughter.

"A nasty one, that," chuckled Sowerby. "Perhaps I was asking for it. But I can see, gentlemen, that I shall have to come to your assistance. The sequel—although we can scarcely call it that—is as follows:—

"I was, at that time, a detective—a private detective. Mrs. Lacey Hatchman employed me to do my best to clear up the most unpleasant affair of the stolen bracelet. I was at Colonel Pennent's garden party simply because two of the guests who had been at the dance—Cartlett and Creery—were there. I did not suspect either of them particularly, but I had them under my professional eye just as I had watched some of the others. My case had baffled me. I had given up hope of clearing the mystery. And I therefore embraced with eagerness the inspiration which made me score a success, and justified the employment of my services."

A murmur of astonishment went round.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed a listener, in a tone of some disapproval. "You deliberately——"

"And why not?" interrupted the narrator, with strong emphasis. "The results following my idea were excellent. The characters of the guests at the dance, on which a sort of smudge rested, were absolutely cleared—save Creery's. A great point gained. Then, as I said, I scored personally; which meant much to me at that time. Then Cartlett, his rival deleted, married Marjorie—a most happy match, and much more so, I venture to think, than if Creery had got her. Finally, gentlemen, one must always remember that the bracelet *was* stolen; and no one here can affirm with absolute certainty that Creery was *not* the culprit!

"I consider that all that is plain and convincing. I'll go and finish my pipe on the lawns. The band is playing Chaminade music—much more to my fancy than that stodgy 'Masaniello' stuff."

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 69.

(The Third of the Series.)

WHAT native does not thank his gods
That it is now no more?
Bleeding from cruel Teuton rods,
He'll live to bless the war.

1. A language that some people strive
Officiously to keep alive.

2. Add head and tail, and you'll be able
To see the author of a fable.

3. Name of a party in the state—
Is it already out of date?

4. You'll find it, or I'm much mistaken,
Not many miles from Copenhagen.

5. A suffragette of long ago,
And river all the schoolboys know.

6. An answer given to a request,
Though not the one that pleases best.

KING COLE.

Answers to Acrostic No. 69 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on September 10th.*

To every light one alternative answer may be sent; it should be written at the side. At the foot of his answer every solver should write his pseudonym and nothing else.

ANSWER TO No. 67.

1.	R	u n	S
2.	E	a	T
3.	G	e a	R
4.	E	y	E
5.	N	o t	E
6.	T	i g h	T

ANSWER TO No. 68.

1.	M	a n g	O
2.	A	c c e n	T
3.	C	a s	H
4.	B	e l l	E
5.	E	e	L
6.	T	a i	L
7.	H	e r	O

Correspondents who write to the Acrostic Editor and desire answers to their queries should enclose a stamped addressed envelope with their letters, and the A. E. will endeavour to reply. Lack of space makes it impossible to answer in print.

Golf as a Test of Character

By the American Golf Champion

As reported by Allison Gray

Illustrations by Alfred Leete

SOME shrewd, keen-eyed business men were recently discussing the tests which are being used by progressive firms in picking *employés*. They agreed as to the value of this new method, at least in showing such traits of character as alertness and decisiveness. But they questioned whether they would reveal certain other fundamental qualities, such as pluck or patience. Finally one of them said :—

" There is one test which I think is absolutely reliable when it comes to finding out the real stuff a man is made of."

" Well, what is it ? " demanded the rest, in chorus.

" Play some game with him ! " was the emphatic answer. " It doesn't make much difference what it is : golf, or tennis, or billiards, or bridge. If you play with him—or watch him play—often enough, so that you are sure of catching him occasionally off his guard, you will know him pretty thoroughly. If I were planning to take an associate in business, or even a subordinate, I'd like to make that test the preliminary to the transaction.

" I'll go even farther than that. If my daughter wanted to marry a man, I'd like to submit him to the same trial. Thirty-six holes of golf would show me most of the things I'd want to know about him."

I happened to be a listener to this conversation, and it decidedly roused my interest. Thirty-six holes of golf as a test of character ! That was a new idea. Why not ask some man who has played thirty-six *thousand* holes what he thinks about it ? " Chick " Evans, holder of both the National Open Championship and the National Amateur Championship, ought to know whether golf shows up a man as he really is. All right ! I'd ask him.

Evans is young—not yet twenty-nine ; but he has known the game of golf since he first made its acquaintance as a caddy at the Edgewater Golf Club when he was only eight years old. He began really to play when he was twelve, and he has been at it ever since.

He is a fine, up-standing chap ; clear-skinned and clear-eyed, eager, alert, and smiling. As secretary of a firm of investment bankers he has an office in a Chicago skyscraper. And there is one thing in that office which must be mentioned if you are really to know " Chick " Evans. It is a certain framed photograph on the wall. I hadn't been in the room two minutes before he called my attention to it.

" Do you know who that is ? " he asked, with the smile of a boy about to give you a Christmas present. " That's my mother ! She's my ' only girl.' From her, and from the game of golf, I

MR. "CHICK" EVANS, THE FAMOUS AMERICAN GOLFER.

"IT IS A FUNNY THING HOW MEN 'LET THEMSELVES GO' WHEN THEY PLAY GOLF."

got my training. And if I didn't amount to anything it wouldn't be their fault; because they are the best teachers in the world.

"Of course," with a satisfied laugh, "I think nobody else has a mother like mine. But they can't help that. Almost anybody, however, can find the chance to play golf. And it is worth the time and expense, just as an education. I've learned a good many things on the *golf* course that are not taught in a *college* course."

"For instance?" I asked.

"Well, self-control is one thing. I guess I must have been born with a bad temper. At any rate, I had one. I was quick and nervous and excitable. When I began to play in tournaments my nerves were so on edge that I couldn't sleep the nights before a match. When I got up at the tee, ready to drive, I would shake so that I could hardly stand. In those days I had to fight my temper to keep it from running away with me. I did fight it, because I was determined to make a golf player out of myself; and I knew I had to choose between the two.

"The man who gives way to his temper is a common figure on the golf course—but you don't often find him in the finals. He may play brilliantly at times; but if he wastes his energy and nervous force throwing his clubs around and kicking up the turf he won't have many championship cups to carry home with him.

"Temper is just a form of self-indulgence, anyway, and a good many men have learned to deny themselves that particular luxury when they are at business. But if they let themselves go when they get out on the links you may be sure that their self-control is only superficial. They haven't really mastered the little devil inside of them.

"It is a funny thing how men do 'let themselves go' when they play golf. They get out into the open in more ways than one. They may *camouflage* their real natures pretty successfully when you meet them socially or in business, but they seem to drop all that sort of thing in a game. It is just as if they took off their mental and moral clothes when they took off their business suit.

"In one way, golf is different from any other game. Do you realize that it is the only one, so far as I can remember, where you win entirely by your skill and your mental and moral qualities, with now and then some help from luck or chance? You do not really fight your opponent, as in other games. You stand or fall by what you do—not by what you do *to him*.

"In tennis, you serve the balls to your opponent and return them to him. And you can defeat him by placing the ball where he can't get it. In billiards you can leave the balls in an unfavourable position for him. In football, you can actually measure your physical strength and speed and cleverness against his. In basketball, in chess and draughts, in bridge, or any other card games, you can force him to make plays which beat him.

"But in golf, your antagonist plays his own ball and you play yours. There is only one time when your ball can be so placed as to interfere with his; but when that happens, it is by accident, never by design. I refer to what is called a 'stymie.' In putting, one player's ball sometimes fails to go into the hole and lies exactly in the way of the opponent's ball. But no one ever brings this about intentionally. It is the result of the failure of his own shot.

"There is one way in which a player can at least try to interfere with his opponent's game; but it is unfair practice, and a man who followed it would lose his standing on the links. Suppose you were playing with a man, and you knew that he had some little trait of character which you could use to make him nervous. Maybe it

"IT UPSETS HIM IF PEOPLE SPEAK TO HIM WHEN HE IS ABOUT TO MAKE A SHOT."

upsets him if people speak to him when he is about to make a shot. If, knowing that, you addressed some remark to him just as *he* was 'addressing' the ball, you might disturb his balance enough to cause him to top the ball. In the end it might make him lose that hole.

"There are always opportunities to play on your opponent's weakness in some such subtle way as this; but to use them is considered unsportsmanlike. A man who would resort to them in a serious match would be condemned by everybody.

"Even the 'gallery' of spectators is expected to observe this unwritten rule. Contrast a golf tournament, for instance, with a football or a baseball game. At a football match there is organized cheering. Anybody with enough lung power can shout encouragement or derision to the players. At a baseball game you can josh a team to your heart's content. But the spectators at a golf tournament are expected to keep quiet.

"Several years ago the English golfer, Hilton, was playing a match with Fred Herreshoff, and there was a large gallery following the game. As the two men walked along from one point to another some of the spectators joined Hilton and began asking him questions. Of course he answered them; it was evident that they did not intend any discourtesy. Quite the contrary. But when Herreshoff noticed what was going on he immediately went to the man in charge and protested. He knew that this conversation, which was being forced on Hilton, might unfavourably affect his (Hilton's) playing. Herreshoff wanted it stopped; and it was. That was an example of good sportsmanship.

"I think the commonest fault which men show on the golf course is temper, or some form of lack of self-control. A man comes up to the tee for his drive, slices his ball, perhaps, and it goes into the rough. What does he do? Well, if there isn't a gallery around, he often breaks loose with a perfect torrent of violent language.

"WHEN HE HAD MADE A BAD SHOT HE SLAMMED HIS CLUB AGAINST A TREE AND BROKE THE SHAFT TO PIECES."

A friend of mine told me of a match he played with a man of this type. The man literally cussed his way from one hole to the next. Once, when he had made a bad shot, he slammed his club against a tree and broke the shaft to pieces. Of course my friend beat him, with two holes still to go. The custom is to keep on and play the remaining holes anyway. But when the result was decided at the sixteenth hole my friend put his clubs in the bag and started back to the house.

"'Aren't you going to play the other holes?' the man called after him.

"'No,' was the calm reply.

"'What's the matter?'

"'I don't care to play any more,' my friend said, quietly, and went on.

"Everybody knew *why* he didn't care to finish the course. They went to him afterwards and told him he did just right. And it wasn't many months before the man who hadn't enough self-respect to control his temper in a game of golf dropped out of that club.

"Another fault which is pretty sure to show itself on the links is conceit. I have seen a good many promising young players ruined by it. Only the humble in spirit

"THE CONCEITED MAN, IF HE BEATS YOU, EITHER PATRONISES YOU OR CROWS OVER YOU."

can improve their playing; and young golfers, if they are at all successful, are likely to set too great a value on their game.

"By humility I don't mean timidity, lack of belief in yourself. It is just the same in golf that it is in business, or in anything else for that matter. You have got to have the courage to attempt things, and the confidence that you can win, or at least make a good showing. But if you get to the point where you think you know it all, and can't learn anything from others and from your own experience, you're finished.

"It would be irritating to play with a very conceited man if you didn't train yourself to be amused instead. He is both a poor loser and a bad winner. If you beat him, he always has a long post-mortem list of excuses and explanations to account for it. And if he beats you, he either patronizes you or crows over you. When he loses, he has a grouch. When he wins, he has a strut. When he loses, he is black. When he wins, he is beaming. If you see a man who takes his failure or his success that way you may be certain that he always thinks first of *himself*. I shouldn't like to be his wife or his partner in business.

"One trait which shows itself in golf more than in any other outdoor game is concentration. You have just one thing to think about—that little ball. You alone are to decide where it is to go. Nobody can alter its movements; they are absolutely in your hands. A man should be able to concentrate every faculty of mind and body on each shot as he makes it.

"Even when he is walking forward after a shot his mind must be busy with what he is going to do next. He must know the 'lie' of his ball, decide on the character of his next shot, and choose mentally the kind of club he is going to use. It calls for both judgment and decision, as well as for concentration.

"That is the reason why golfers do not like to talk while they are walking forward between shots. I believe some people criticize me because, even in a tournament, I speak to my friends among the spectators. They think it betrays a lack of concentration on my part. If I say 'Halloa, Jim!' to somebody, they think my mind isn't on the game as it should be.

"They cite Jerome Travers, for instance. And certainly Travers is an example of supreme concentration. To the onlooker it seems as if the game were a life and death affair to him. He never smiles, never speaks. And there is Walter J. Travis, who, whether winning or losing, never fails to play with cool and careful precision. He, too, rarely smiles, and almost never speaks.

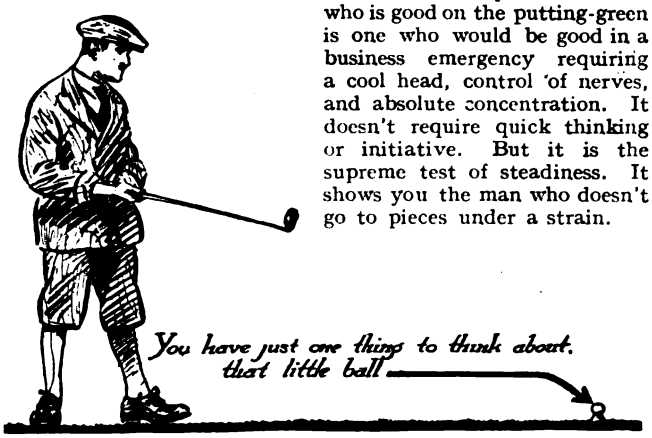
"But you cannot always judge of a man's concentration by his outward demeanour. Back in the days when, as I said before, I could not sleep when a match was on and shook with nervousness when I got to the tee, I don't remember that anybody remarked it. But after I had schooled myself so that I slept like a baby before a big match, and had gained self-control in playing, some of the critics began to talk of my being 'nervous.'

"Maybe I fool them the same way when it is a matter of concentration. It is a natural reaction for me, when I see a friend, to say 'Halloa, Jim!' There would be more of a conscious mental effort if I did *not* say it. As for concentrating, we do that, too, according to our temperament. When I start forward after a shot I am sizing up the situation intently. But when I have *decided* what I am going to do next—well, I've decided. Then it is natural for me to look around.

"On the putting-green concentration is more necessary than at any other point in the game. And a man's ability in putting is a good gauge of his mental control. For the benefit of those who do not know golf, let me explain that the putting-green is the square of fine, close turf around the hole—the little four-and-a-quarter-inch opening into which the ball must be sent. And a 'putt' is a stroke on this green. It is the most delicate one in the game. It calls for relaxed muscles in the arms and wrists; and even a slight twitch, or any lack of perfect freedom, will spoil the stroke.

"Character shows itself on the putting-green! A man may be a good driver, he may like the big swing and the feeling of starting something. But it is on the green that he shows his power to negotiate a delicate and difficult transaction, to keep himself well in hand until a thing is done. In a championship he has to do this under the most difficult conditions. Several hundred spectators stand round, watching him with breathless interest. He knows that probably a good many of them have money on the game. And there is a psychological effect from all this to which it is very hard to be insensible. He must shut out even the consciousness of the spectators being there. If he cannot do that, the mere sound of a chance remark, of a woman's laugh, or the half-seen movement of a parasol, may cause him to miss his putt.

"I should say that a man who is good on the putting-green is one who would be good in a business emergency requiring a cool head, control of nerves, and absolute concentration. It doesn't require quick thinking or initiative. But it is the supreme test of steadiness. It shows you the man who doesn't go to pieces under a strain.



"Here is an interesting idea: I believe that in playing in a tournament men show themselves more as they are in business; and that, in playing what you might call a social game, just for the exercise and the relaxation, they show their real personality.

"You see, a tournament *is* business, for the time being. It is played for compensation—a title, a silver cup. And involuntarily a man puts his business self into it. He is conscious that he is under observation, that he is being judged by outsiders, and he shows more self-control and is more careful, both in his game and in his self-expression, than he is when just playing for amusement.

"All the same, you cannot watch a man through several tournaments without getting a good line on his character. There is Robert Gardner, for instance, 'Bobby' Gardner, as his hosts of friends call him. I think he has the very perfection of manner on the links. He is always cheerful, always courteous. In playing with him, even in a match, you never lose sight of the fact that golf is a *game*, a friendly contest of skill, a mutual experience in sportsmanship. Nelson Whitney, of New Orleans, is another golfer with the same characteristics. And I could name many others whose fine qualities I know through golf as I could scarcely have learned them in any other way of association.

"You will not often find a man with a 'yellow streak' playing golf. In the first place, I don't think the game appeals to that type of man. And in the second place, the traditions and ideals of the game are so high that the 'yellow' player would not last long in a club. Of course there are chances for trickery and dishonesty in golf, just as there are in any game, from bean-bags to baseball. But in spite of the fact that there are fewer rules to guard against these things in golf than in any other organized game, I think it is the cleanest sport in the world.

"There is an interesting story *à propos* of this point. When the game was introduced into the United States we Americans went into it with characteristic energy and with the typical Yankee concern about winning. A man was telling me about it the other day, and he said that the players here were very keen then about rules. They insisted on the pound of flesh, so to speak, for every technical infraction. They watched each other like hawks, and claimed the limit in penalties for anything and everything.

"For instance, even in a casual friendly game, one man would say that another had 'soled' his club in a bunker-shot—that is, touched his club to the ground when he was supposed not to—and would stop the play to argue about it.

"The rules here were those used by the Ancient and Honourable St. Andrews Golf Club in Scotland, and probably hadn't been revised for a hundred years or more. These punctilious players, who wanted everything to be regulated by the book, went to Mr. David Forgan, in Chicago—himself a Scotsman and an excellent golfer—and set up a howl about getting the rules revised. They wanted them brought up to date, they said, so that every possible point would be covered. Mr. Forgan told them that if the game of golf had to have printed rules in order to make men conduct themselves like honest gentlemen he'd quit playing it; and that ended the matter.

"The result is that 'tradition' has proved far more compelling than a five-foot shelf of rules would be. And the tricky and dishonest man is less common, and much more uncomfortable, on the golf course than almost anywhere else.

"IT IS ON THE PUTTING-GREEN THAT A MAN SHOWS HIS POWER TO KEEP HIMSELF WELL THE MOST DIFFICULT CONDITIONS. SEVERAL HUNDRED SPECTATORS

"I have kept one important point for the last. It is this: Never quit until the game is irretrievably lost! The man who does is a fool as well as a coward. Every golfer with much experience can tell you of games that have been won by the player who, at some stage, seemed hopelessly beaten. It doesn't pay to give up, and it shows a fault in character as well. A game is not lost until the last hole is played; or at least not until the shot which actually finishes it is made. Yet I know men who feel beaten when the game is just begun.

"In Minneapolis, in 1910, I was playing in the Western Amateur against Robert Hunter; and Warren K. Wood, a well-known golfer, was caddying for me. On the thirty-seventh hole Hunter was on the green in two, while my drive went into a bunker, my second into another bunker, and my third failed even to get out. If ever a man seemed justified in picking up his ball and quitting, I did. And I confess that I started to do so. But Warren objected, and I followed his advice.

"The result was that my next shot landed on the green, and in two putts I holed *out*, while Hunter took *four*, which made us even again. In the end I won on the thirty-ninth hole. This was an extreme case, but it shows that the quitter deserves to lose if he stops before he is actually beaten.

"A man told me not long ago that he and two other young players were being sized up once by an experienced golfer as championship possibilities. The wise old fellow looked them over keenly—he hadn't even seen them play—and delivered his ultimatum.

"'There's only one of you that has the making of a real champion,' he said. 'For there's only one that has the necessary iron in his soul.'

"In a way, he was right. A man must have iron 'in his soul' to stay and win in almost any contest. As a rule, the cool, self-poised, silent type makes the best golfer. The assured, easy-talking, dashing type is likely to be erratic. But the iron may be in a man even though he is not hard and cold. Gardner is the proof of that, to name only one example. And there is Francis Ouimet, who is boyishly cheerful when not playing, and is always pleasant and friendly during the game.

"A man has got to show one trait in golf, perhaps more than in other games, and that is self-reliance. For nobody can help him, except with advice. There is no team work. You can't score on anybody else's hit. You haven't any guard, or protection, or assistance. Nobody 'sacrifices' that you may gain.

"Perhaps, just on this account, most golfers have some pet superstition, some mascot, to which they cling. I suppose it is the ineradicable human instinct to play something besides a solitary game against fortune. Most of these golf whims centre around clothes. I remember that in my early days I wore a certain sweater until it literally left me by pieces, because I thought it was 'lucky.' I know other players who invariably take a bath and change every article of their clothing for the afternoon round if they have lost in the morning.

"As my game became steadier my superstitions lost their hold on me. But I still have a few left. For instance, just before I went to Minneapolis for the National Open Championship tournament, a friend gave me a little charm he had brought from Hawaii. I won. But, believe me, I did not rely entirely upon the good luck charm! However, I confess that I carried it to Merion for the National Amateur Championship, and I won again. While I do not attribute my victories to that talisman—for I worked hard for them—the little figure and I have been on very good terms ever since."

IN HAND UNTIL A THING IS DONE. IN A CHAMPIONSHIP HE HAS TO DO THIS UNDER STAND ROUND, WATCHING HIM WITH BREATHLESS INTEREST."

The Woman who Learned

by May Edginton

ILLUSTRATED BY SYDNEY SEYMOUR LUCAS

This is a problem story. Was Philip Kearney right or wrong in acting as he did? What is your opinion?

KEARNEY sat waiting for Beatrice Cathcart. His interest in seeing her again, thus, in London, after all that he knew of had passed in Africa, was acute; but he was not impatient for her rather tardy appearance. He could sit watching this crowd for hours.

Himself, he was unmistakable—the type of well-bred rover that only England turns out in this pattern; tall, well-made, any age between thirty and forty-five; brown as a boot, groomed like a Derby winner, clothed right, shod right, barbered right. Two days ago he had landed, wired a few perfectly good lies to some clamorous relations in Devonshire, gone straight as an arrow to town, looked into his clubs, visited his tailor, his bootmaker, his hosier, and his hairdresser; asked what sort of dance the jazz was, turned to his notebook for the names and addresses of the women he knew three years ago, and then said, "Why, poor Beatrice! She's home again!" Systematic telephoning did the rest, and he found her.

This restaurant was good enough. He could sit watching this crowd for hours, absolute hours—— But suddenly she came into the great vestibule.

He saw her before she saw him. She had gone very thin. She moved quietly and listlessly. She was nicely turned out as ever, but the life had left her. He had seen women look like Beatrice before. She looked lost. A man had told him, out on the Zambezi, that she had taken Perry's death awfully hard. He saw that it was indeed true.

They clasped hands. "Well?" he said, smiling down at her. "It is splendid to see you again, Mrs. Cathcart."

Her fingers clung, perhaps unconsciously. "And splendid to see you. Let's see. We haven't met since two months before he——"

"I went up the Zambezi, as you know, with some men."

"I know. Am I a little late for lunch? A dressmaker kept me."

"Orlando won't have given away my table, I think. Shall we go in and see?" But the great head-waiter was already advancing upon them with his most confidential smile.

"How are you, Orlando?" said Kearney.

Head-waiters in the best hotels half over the world knew Kearney. He was that kind of man. Now Orlando, with his most complimentary deference for Beatrice, himself ushered them to their table. "It is nearly four years since you honoured me, Mr. Kearney," he said. "I was dee-lighted to hear your voice over ze 'phone zis morning. I haf for you ze same table."

"I ordered lunch," said Kearney.

"It was cooked to the mee-nute, Mr. Kearney."

Kearney studied Beatrice. She was taking off white gloves slowly, finger by finger, and glancing round her.

"I've forgotten everyone," he said. "Anyone you know here?"

Beatrice looked at him, and her eyes arrested his.

"I?" she said. "Know anyone? No one knows me, Philip."

She called him by his first name unconsciously. It was the way she thought of all poor Perry's friends.

Kearney could have bitten out his tongue. But then Orlando came with a menial, and pleasant serving commenced. Kearney looked thoughtfully through a wine-list, saying to himself: "Of course! Poor girl!" And the thought of his own relations, especially the Devonshire ones, flitted through his mind.

He looked at Beatrice again carefully. He knew women, which is a broad statement, but not too broad for the Kearneys of the world. "She needs to talk," he thought.

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"Well, Beatrice," he said, when she had eaten and drunk, and had a touch of the old eagerness in her eyes, "how's life?"

"Philip!"

"Pretty rotten, eh?"

She nodded.

"Is it the good people trying to make a little Hades for you?"

She nodded.

"Burn 'em!" said Kearney. "Do you care?"

"It's lonely, Philip."

"Yes," said Kearney; "a woman must have friends—women friends. Yes. My dear Beatrice, why did you come home?"

"It was lonely, Philip."

"My God, it must have been, my dear!" said Kearney. In a swift vision he saw her there alone with her dead; not widow, nor wife. When she had buried Perry—what a loneliness! No, Africa had nothing for her.

"So you came home?"

"I thought a few people—the ones I had cared for—might still——"

"And they didn't?"

"I wrote to Lilian Malcolm—we were at school together; great friends in our early married days. She wrote me a long letter back—she's very, very *good*, Philip——"

"Won't receive you?"

She shook her head.

"You mean Tom Malcolm's wife?"

"Yes."

"And your husband—Cathcart?"

"He died three months ago."

"Leaving you well provided for—better than poor Perry could?"

"No. When he refused divorce he swore he'd never give me a penny. I'm poor. Still——"

She made a gesture, signifying, "That doesn't matter."

"Ah!" said Kearney.

"Philip," she said, "you know we loved each other very much. It was a wonderful life together. He showed me what God meant when He made woman and gave her to man. We were so happy! There wasn't a thing in the world which didn't seem somehow beautiful. But now, Philip, there is no springtime any more in the world; I am always alone; it is always cold. He has gone. I am dead too."

"No, my child," said Kearney, very gently. "You are young yet."

"You mean there is still a long way to go."

"Beatrice," he said, "I am older than you, not only in years, but in the ways in which men are always older than women, the old ways of wickedness and wisdom, my child. You want friends, my dear; you want sympathy, and kind houses opened to you, and decent women—however, what I gather from you puts one a little out of conceit with the typical decent woman for the moment. God! Aren't they stones!" He filled her glass. "Drink to your future, Beatrice; because you'll have to carry on. And here's luck to you, my dear!"

Before he left her, after arranging to take her to this and that—the Academy, the Horse Show, a theatre, a supper-club—she had a little colour in her white cheeks, though he had not driven the wistful look from her eyes. Kearney thought of his good friend, Perry—how he had worshipped her! He would have died to bring her any delight. But he had died, poor fellow, and brought her disgrace.

"Hang respectable married women!" said Kearney, thinking of Lady Malcolm.

He did not know her. He had just a faint memory or idea that she was one of those women who push a dull husband into Parliament; hunt one or two days a week in winter; come up to do the season; have a certain number of shooting parties; a family of a certain number also; and who administer the feminine side of a country estate the rest of the year.

"That will be her!" said Kearney. "Confound her!"

He knew that under her wing Beatrice could creep back into toleration. But these good women—they folded their wings up tight! Afraid of harbouring waifs!

It just happened that some man at his club, refusing a suggestion for bridge that evening, remarked to Kearney, "If one sits down to play you know what it is. . . . And I promised to look in at Lady Malcolm's."

Kearney had nowhere in particular to go; and he did not care where he went, anyway. Nine o'clock found him well-dined, waiting in the club lounge for a taxi. A telephone directory had given him the address in Chester Place. He drove there, thinking in a sort of vagrant fashion of half-remembered faces, dim forgotten hours. London streets raised many ghosts. Other streets of widely differing *genre* could do the same: Stamboul; Johannesburg; Moscow; Delhi; Vienna; Paris; and then the wild places. . . . But to-night a thread of thought linked all these. In all these places, the thought ran, people were the same; women the same.

He took a resolve about little Beatrice Cathcart. "For Perry's sake," he said to himself. Then the taxi-cab stopped in a line of cars and carriages.

The door of the Malcolms' house was open, and a stream of people trickling in. There were pretty *débutantes* unknown to him, and a few men who were passing acquaintances. He followed them in, gave up his hat and coat, and walked upstairs with unruffled aplomb. So little an adventure, strolling into the house of a perfectly strange hostess! It was tame. All the same, beside his resentment about Beatrice, he felt a certain contemptuous curiosity, which, almost directly, was satisfied.

Lilian Malcolm stood in the doorway of a great room, shaking hands and smiling. Beyond one could see a good dancing floor. An orchestra played. Kearney paused before Lady Malcolm.

She was as he had expected; in the thirties, already set in mind and body; rather florid; healthy; placid; with a well-bred smile; a stiff style of hairdressing, and a conservative gown.

Kearney shook hands with her, saw her eye pause on him uncertainly, then passed on and stood against the wall inside the room.

They were dancing.

He watched Lady Malcolm from time to time. Her healthy and nice-featured face was devoid of all potentiality for emotion. Kearney knew women. He guessed her at once. "She has never been tempted," he said to himself, "and she sits in judgment. There is no cocksureness like the cocksureness of a prude."

Half an hour later, when the incoming stream of people had thinned and ceased, Lady Malcolm found beside her the most attractive looking man who had ever lingered there. She was not a woman who allured men; she was the complete opposite of the Beatrice ilk.

"I have been watching you," he said, smiling.

She replied rather abruptly: "I know you have," and then, to cover the admission, fell back upon humbug, as he knew she would. "My poor husband is at the House; let me see, you've met him——"

"I want to tell you about it," said Kearney, "if we may dance. May I have a dance? As a matter of fact, you have a great deal to forgive me for, but, believe me, I have only just realized it."

Many times after Lilian Malcolm said to herself: "Did I say I'd dance with him or not?" but she could never remember. He took her for granted. She suspected him for a stranger; had done so when he first came in; and yet when he put an arm around her, and they began to dance, he was strange no longer.

She knew nothing of men as lovers. She attracted none. She was rigidly unversed.

Kearney made his confession. "I'm at the wrong house." He explained easily and fluently how it could have arisen; she learned he was only just back in England; a chance word or two betrayed that he should be, even now, staying with his cousins, the Devonshire Garths. That satisfactorily fixed him in her inquiring mind. He was perfectly all right.

He had met Sir Tom now and again. They belonged to the same club.

When the last guest had gone, Lilian Malcolm went to bed. Dawn stole up the London streets, and the sparrows were chirping outside, but in her bedroom the electric lights were full on, and she went and looked at herself long in the glass, turning this way and that. She was unusually long in undressing, hindered by thoughts which took no form. Kearney particularly wanted to take her to see a certain South African picture in a certain exhibition the next afternoon, and so, of course, he was coming to lunch.

As it happened he would be the only guest.

It was not until they stood together before the picture that Kearney mentioned Beatrice, and then only because, he explained, the picture suggested her to him.

"Did you ever know a Mrs. Cathcart? Beatrice Cathcart? She ran away from an uncongenial husband with a frightfully good chap, a friend of mine, Reginald Perry. I met them both out there. They had a farm on the veldt, and good heavens! weren't they happy! Then Perry died, and she's back here, I believe. Do you know her?"

"I knew her years ago," said Lady Malcolm, coldly. "But she will hardly take up her old life again. A woman who loses her head like she did must expect to pay for it."

"I suppose you women are right about that," reflected Kearney, soberly. Then he talked charmingly of other things, so charmingly that she forgot the allusion to Beatrice until they were back again in the Chester Place house, and she was giving him tea.

She sat in an easy chair; he stood on the hearthrug looking down at her. She knew all the time, without looking at him, that he was looking at her. Suddenly he made two quick steps, was near her, and, bending down, he put a hand on the arm of her chair.

"Have *you*," he said, softly and vibrantly, "never lost your head?"

She had to look up at him. Her breath went. It was the queerest sensation, almost devastating.

"I?" she uttered. "N-no. Certainly not. How do you mean? If you m-m-m-mean——"

Her voice trailed away. It was ridiculous. She was extremely vexed with herself.

"You give me permission to say really what I do mean?" said Kearney, very close to her.

She was silent. Her own silence disturbed her.

"I have permission?" said Kearney, triumphantly. That particular triumph had never come into a man's voice before for her, and she sensed it with a thrill that she instantly subdued. He took permission. "I mean, you've never been in love. You've lost the wonder of the world—a woman like you!" His tone expressed infinite homage. "Oh, Lilian!" he said, breathlessly. "I think you are the most wonderful woman I've ever met; and I've met women in many countries. And, Lilian, I thank God for that blessed mistake last night!"

Lilian Malcolm knew of several things she might have said: "You're a complete stranger, Mr. Kearney. . . . You must not call me by my first name. . . . You must not talk like this." The things remained unsaid. They were too trite, altogether too little, too silly. And yet, the longer she remained silent, the more she committed herself. So at length she just moved restlessly in her chair and murmured something that was nothing.

She felt him watching her, and her heart beat.

"Do you mind my saying that?" he asked.

"No," she said, "no, of course not. How absurd! Have some more tea."

Kearney was an absolute master of the right moment. He knew both by natural gifts and by experience how and when to pause.

"Thanks, dear little lady," he said. She was not little; the adjective was an added endearment. He had some more tea.

They talked of people both knew; he told her expurgated little stories of his life. He left reluctantly about six-thirty. It had been a very long visit, and yet—very short.

Lilian was going out with her husband. She went upstairs to dress. The room was empty; her maid was in the bathroom preparing a bath. Lilian walked at once to her glass. Her face was radiant; her eyes shone. She gazed at

herself; quite good hair, quite good features—and yet her appearance was surely taking on prematurely a too matronly expression? She thought of one or two slim, exotic women whom she countenanced frostily but never approved. She thought of their clothes. "It is a good thing to change one's dressmaker now and again," she said to herself. She suddenly began singing *sotto voce*.

Tom came in, sleek and burly.

"Cheerful you sound," he said, "singing away all to yourself."

"Was I singing?"

Most of the evening she was thinking intermittently: "I wonder if we're likely to meet again? So that I can thank him for the sweet flowers. That wandering kind of man—so busy——"

Next morning, when her bedside telephone whirred, she knew, in her half-sleep, who was at the other end of the wire. It was quite early—only half-past eight—which made an ordinary telephone call seem charmingly impetuous. The fact that he had almost nothing to say, after all, added to the impetuosity.

"Halloa!"

"YOU'VE NEVER BEEN IN LOVE. YOU'VE LOST THE WONDER OF THE WORLD—A WOMAN LIKE YOU!"

"Like a bally thrush. I'll be ready at seven-thirty."

He went out.

She smiled unknowingly.

"I'm not going to let that man come here very often," she thought.

The maid came in with an armful of flowers.

"These have just arrived, my lady. There is no card."

Lady Malcolm took them in her arms. She needed no message to tell her who had sent them. He must have gone straight from her and bought the flowers. She remembered she did not know his private address. Letters sometimes lay at clubs uncalled-for for weeks.

"Is that Lady Malcolm speaking? Yes? This is Philip Kearney."

"Yes; I recognized your voice."

"It is perfectly sweet of you to tell me so."

She bit her lip and coloured as she sat up, all alone.

"Thanks so much for the flowers."

"Ah, they reached you before you went out? You told me you were going out. Have I waked you too early?"

"No, no."

"The flowers were an apology for having said too much."

"Oh, but—you—you—didn't."

"Do you tell me I did not say too much?"

"I mean——"

"Are you there? Thank you for telling me that. Will you be in any time to-day?"

"I am going to be busy."

"Yes. But I will come any minute of any hour."

Lady Malcolm's heart beat thickly.

She hesitated.

"Halloa!" came his voice. "Are you there? Mayn't I call for a few minutes?"

She answered, in a light, airy way: "Oh, yes, of course. People are coming to lunch. But about three o'clock I shall probably be alone." As soon as she had said it she bit her lip. She had not meant——

Of course she had not meant——

After Kearney's triumphant "Thank you," there was silence. She hung up the receiver and lay down again. That morning she wrestled very abstractedly with her correspondence. People were silly! They had written up from the country about dairy difficulties. She usually threw her heart and soul into her model dairy. But—why couldn't the fools manage?

Her two children came in to kiss her before walking with their governess in the Park.

Tom came to her sitting-room. He, too, had been bothered. His bailiff had written, troublesomely.

"Well you look this morning, old girl," he said, glancing at her in a rather surprised way before he went out again.

At three she was alone, waiting, waiting, waiting for Kearney's ring.

When it sounded she pretended she had not heard.

Totally unversed as she was, she did not know it, but she was already admitting this to herself: that she must be on guard. So she was standing at the French window opening to the flower-filled balcony, with her back to the room, when Kearney was shown in. She even stupidly pretended to be oblivious of her butler's quiet announcement, and remained looking from the window. A soft occasional rush of a car came up from Chester Place, otherwise there reigned the quiet that sometimes seems to drop upon a lazy London drawing-room. Kearney had the whole situation in a brief look. Already she was pretending and fighting. He paused two seconds to see if she would look round, and come forward with the conventional word on her lips. She did not. Sure about the next quarter of an hour, anyway, he strode silently across the room, took her in his arms, turned her to face him, and kissed her. It was done.

He knew she would now be frightened of herself; and she was. She began to resist him; he tightened his arms. She began to whisper, "Oh-h, you m-m-must not"; he did not allow her to speak. She was amazed and shaking. He held her and kissed her till he felt her resistance falter. When at last he allowed her, she whispered: "Let me go!"

"Look at me, Lilian!" he ordered. She refused to obey. "You do not want me to let you go," he said.

"I—I—I—— Will you go? Please go!"

"If you tell me to go, Lilian, I'll go. Do you mean it?"

She hesitated. And just as she was going to say, stubbornly and desperately, "Yes!" he saw the "yes" coming and kissed her. "You don't want me to go," he said.

"Sit down," she murmured.

They sat down, side by side, on a Chesterfield couch. Kearney looked at her. She was not like the same woman. He kissed her hands one after the other and all her finger-tips one after the other. "Darling," he said, simply, dropping his hand on her knee, "hasn't anyone ever told you before that you are absolutely the sweetest thing that ever happened?"

No one had ever told Lilian this before. Kearney knew it as well as she did.

She looked at him mutely. Again he kissed her.

"I—I—shall have to go," she stammered.

"Engagements?" he asked.

She nodded.

"You can't keep a single one of them," said Kearney, masterfully, "till you've told me when I can see you again."

"Mr. Kearney——"

"No, Lilian. You don't call me Mr. Kearney. You silly darling!"

"Philip—you'd better not see me again."

"That is right out of the question. So when may it be?"

She was silent.

He pressed: "What are you doing to-night?"

"Nothing, to-night."

"Dining alone at home? Husband at the House?"

"Yes."

"Dine with me instead. Come to my flat. My God! don't be afraid! Come, darling. You want to. Now, don't you want to?"

As yet it was impossible for Lilian to make that admission.

"And I want you so, dearest," said Kearney.

"Philip, don't you see—I can't. I daren't ——"

"My dearest, it's a progressive world. You would be doing nothing more than many women do dozens of times in their lives if they care for a man."

Those slim, exotic women with the rather wonderful clothes. . . .

"But, Philip——"

"No, darling. There is no 'but'! You're your own this evening—no engagements." He took her in his arms. "Now promise."

"I ought not."

"My God! Darling girl, we can't leave it like this! Don't you see we must at least talk things over, as we can't do here, with your servants about, your husband—oh, all the lot! I wouldn't compromise you for the world."

"Yes. I—we—perhaps—I think we must talk it out."

Kearney meant to have her alone that evening on whatever pretext. A talk, yes—but it wouldn't be the excellent, moral talk full of good resolutions which she was pretending to herself it would be! She, who had lived upon the judgment seat—she knew nothing yet of the thousand ways of love; the thousand delights

"NEXT MORNING, WHEN HER BEDSIDE TELEPHONE WHIRRED, SHE KNEW, IN HER HALF-SLEEP, WHO WAS AT THE OTHER END OF THE WIRE, AND COLOURED AS SHE SAT UP, ALL ALONE."

and the thousand perils. He said: "Thank you, my darling. I'll come and call for you, shall I, dear? Because you won't use your car, will you?"

A flicker crossed her face. He watched it come and go. The first acknowledged deceit—that would go hard with her. She, so blandly impeccable, would hate to stoop to the little subterfuges. But he knew perfectly well that soon she would love them all, all!

She murmured faintly: "If you'll call——"

"I shall, dear, at seven-thirty." He drew her with him, up to her feet. "Till then, good-bye. Lilian, say good-bye. Say good-bye, dear."

She would not, however, return his kiss; nor put her arms about his neck. "She shall, this evening," he thought. He read all she was thinking. "I know what you're thinking," he said, seriously. "You're afraid I'll make love to you all the time, to-night. And—you're afraid you'll like it. But, dear, I promise—*I promise*—I'll be just as good as you want me to be."

When he had gone, Lilian Malcolm did a thing for which she could find no excuse at all. She cancelled, by telephone, her engagement to look in at a charity concert, ordered her car, and drove to a dressmaker whom she had never favoured before.

"I want," she said, abruptly, "to pick up a dinner gown for immediate wear. Perhaps you have some model which would fit me."

They knew her, of course, and her style of dressing, which had varied only by slight conformation to fashion, for years. After a look at her they brought out a matronly affair, smilingly sure it would please. She refused it uneasily. "I want something different to the things I usually wear." "Your ladyship is adopting a new style?" "Well, perhaps——"

All their crafty treasures were brought out then. They fitted her with an ivory coloured frock, sheath-like and yet so draped that her hard and sturdy lines were softened into something like real curves. She carried this revelation home with her in the car.

When Kearney took her cloak from her at seven forty-five, in the hall of his flat, and saw the ivory gown, he repeated to himself: "Oh, women! the same all the world over!" And he murmured to her: "Do you know what you look like?"

She thrilled all over; and was glad. There was no use in deceiving herself. She was glad.

As she looked around, the flat was not strange to her. It was his.

All the while during dinner her sense of rectitude was trying to refuse to share the secret which her heart was telling, beat by beat. It was: that she was impatient for the end of dinner; the end of service; impatient for the delayed moment when they should be alone.

Possibly Kearney knew how that would be.

He might, anyway, have ordered a shorter dinner. It took an hour; a whole precious hour. He knew when she became abstracted while he talked that she began to fret.

At last they were alone, and looked at one another.

"Well, my dear?" said the man.

She did not answer.

"Kiss me, Lilian," said Kearney, leaning towards her over the table. She leaned towards him and their lips met.

"Come and sit here, darling," he said. And they rose and sat together near the fire. "Lilian," he murmured, "I want to make love to you; but if you will hate it and me, darling, I won't."

She made none but a sort of faint murmurous resistance when five minutes later he drew her into his arms.

Two hours after, when he had driven her home, she was again before her glass in her ivory colour gown. The talk had not run on the lines on which she had told herself and him she had intended it to run. She had yielded to putting her arms around his neck, kissing him good night. The last fragments of talk in the dark cab were flitting restlessly in her brain:

"You're not a woman of many love affairs, are you, Lilian?"

"I—I have never before—and I am going to stop now——"

"You are not going to stop now. You have never had a great love affair, have you, Lilian?"

"My—my husband—Tom——"

"You have never had a great love affair?"

She was quiet. It was so.

"Don't you think life is a desert without just one, Lilian?"

She had now a secret in her heart; she, who had always declared that no decent woman should ever have passages in her life which the whole world might not know.

Before a week was out she had again been to the flat. This time it was later. She sent the car home after a theatre party, and Kearney spirited her away in a taxi. No one knew. She was above suspicion. She stayed till after midnight. She still had a faint belief in her own strength, and was unaware that had Kearney taken her in his arms remorselessly and persuaded her to stay, she would have stayed. All the same, he did whisper to her:—

"I wish you would not go."

And though her lips did not reply, her heart was beating: "I want to stay. I—want—to—stay."

About this time she found sunset and dawn almost intolerably beautiful, she heard music in ordinary sounds, and slowly, like a child at its primer, she read history in people's faces.

A dark, hot night; she never forgot the velvet breath of it—stars in the sky; she never forgot their golden dust sprinkled particle by particle upon the dull blue roof of the world—the rose-gardens down to the river; she never forgot nor forgave a rose the luscious sweetness of its scent—the trees of Richmond black against the lighter curtain of night; she never forgot the mysterious upward reaching of them—the river; she never forgot its inscrutable secret flowing, and she herself was so dammed-up!—behind them the lighted hotel they had just left; she never forgot that tasteless and ambrosial dinner.

The gardens went down to the river-edge, and she had walked down their length with Kearney. They sat down and could see the dark river twinkle by. She longed for his arms.

He spoke. "Lilian, this can't go on, It can't."

"W—w—what?" she whispered. "W—w—why?"

But she knew.

"I am only a man," said Kearney.

But what a man! With every fibre of her she loved him.

In a moment or two she felt what she longed for; his arms.

"Lilian," he whispered, "will you?"

"Anything," she whispered back.

"Couldn't you get away for a few days? For three days? For two?"

"In the season!"

"Go over to Paris."

"I never do."

"But you are learning to do many new things."

She set her wits to work. "I could do this," she was presently murmuring, "and that. I could say . . . ."

"We should be together for three whole days," whispered Kearney.

"Oh, Philip," she murmured, "I want to be always with you. Always! Always!"

"Lilian, you wouldn't give up your home: your friends? The whole approval of society?"

"I would give up anything!"

He kissed her. She pressed closer to him. "Make plans, darling," he said. They made them there in the rose gardens.

It was not to be Paris, but a little quiet village by the sea.

She had made a splendid little map of her reasons for going, each reason leading by a perfectly good road to the next, but they were not asked for. No one concerned questioned her. Lilian Malcolm was taken on trust.

She was to leave her maid at home.

She was to meet Kearney at Dover.

Never in her life had she been so happy.

She had packed her bag herself, because there was a new frock in it, not a Paris frock, a lovely little frock like chintz, to wear by the sea. And she had packed her most beautiful intimate things with a smile, a delicious tremor. At Dover, she sat in the hotel waiting. He was to be there for lunch, motoring down.

At one o'clock she was watching the road.

At one-fifteen she was watching the road.

At one-thirty she was watching the white road.

She knew his car well by now; it had a body of shining silver-grey which flashed in the sunlight. Many cars approached, but by two o'clock there was no silver flash flying down the white road.

"'OH, PHILIP,' SHE MURMURED, 'I WANT TO BE ALWAYS WITH YOU. ALWAYS! ALWAYS!'"

The boat left at three.

God! . . . . *God!* . . . . *An accident?*

"Will you lunch, madam?" said a waiter, approaching.

"I am waiting for a gentleman."

Two-thirty. She was praying; and her heart felt as if, at any moment, it must stop.

"Will you lunch, now, madam?" said the waiter, approaching.

She would lunch.

She walked in steadily. Her hands were cold and the palms damp.

An accident ?

The boat left at three.

Her whole heart and soul and brain were one intense concentration. Her body burned.

Three o'clock. Three-five. Three-ten. All—all over !

The waiter approached. "There is a telephone message for a lady named Malcolm." He looked at her questioningly. She nodded. He laid a little slip of paper beside her on the table.

"The gentleman says he is unable to join you to-day," the clerk had written down.

No accident, then—but what had happened ?

What could have happened at this cruel, cruel eleventh hour ?

Three-thirty.

The waiter looked at her questioningly.

"Yes," she said, replying calmly, "bring my bill and a Bradshaw."

She was travelling back to Town.

He could not say much, of course, to a clerk over the telephone.

There would be a letter, if not himself, awaiting her return.

There was no letter.

She made a simple explanation to the butler of having through mere stupidity lost to-day's boat ; then moistened her lips and asked : "By the way, Mr. Kearney hasn't rung up to-day ? "

"No, my lady."

"Ring up—ring up—and just ask if he's in."

After a few minutes : "He is not in, my lady."

She shut the drawing-room door and was alone with herself. What a terrible companion ! Oh, what a haggard, fierce, haunted, tormented woman !

What had happened ?

Should she wire ? He was not in. His man would open it. Servants . . . . he had always told her to be very, very, very careful.

She ordered her car.

She did not care about being careful. She was consumed. Now, what mattered except that she should know quickly ?

She was at the familiar flat, speaking to the servant.

Mr. Kearney had said he should not be in till late. It was possible he was dining at one of his clubs, not returning home to dress. The servant did not really know.

She drove home. She must wait.

She must wait in torment.

But perhaps now she would find him at home.

He was not there.

She wanted help. She wanted a wisdom greater than her own limited one to say : "It means this," or "It means that."

Hadn't she some such friend ? Just someone to pass away a haunted hour with, till relief might come ?

Hadn't she some such friend ? No. The women she considered her intimate friends were women like herself ; like she had been ; correct, impeccable ; all self-constituted jurywomen.

She was by her desk, her finger-tips pattering ceaselessly over it. She looked down dumbly at an array of formal letters. Then one—Beatrice's.

It caught her eye. It had been answered ; should have been consigned to destruction. But she'd been abstracted ; her correspondence was in confusion. There it still was—the sad, beseeching thing. It lay there, speaking to her.

She did not even think : "Beatrice ? . . . . Ah, there but for the grace of God go I ! " No. She thought : "Beatrice ! Ah, God ! Ah, God ! If I were she . . . . If I were she ! "

Beatrice had drunk from the cup. Thrice fortunate woman ! Blessed ! Blessed ! Blessed !

She tore out the letter, read the telephone number at its head, and took the receiver from the instrument on her desk.

Kearney was in his club when Tom Malcolm came in. They saw each other, and Malcolm came over to him. "Haven't seen you since I don't know when," he said, grasping the other's hand, "but my wife mentioned you. You've called ? Very nice of you. Talking of my wife, I was amazed this evening. Amazed ! Just dropped in home, and what should you think ? Well, you remember that Cathcart business ? Perry was a friend of yours. Poor fella. Still, it wasn't the thing to do. Well, my wife has steadily refused to countenance that little woman since she came back ; but this evening I drop in, and there, believe me or not, were my wife and little Mrs. Cathcart talking as thick as thieves. Now——"

"A moment, Malcolm," said Kearney, motioning a servant. "Ask the telephone clerk to ring up Captain Lakin at the Athletic Club, and tell him I'll be delighted to join in. Lakin," he said, turning to Tom, "is off to Alaska with a party of good fellows day after to-morrow, and I was entirely undecided till just now as to whether I'd go or not. But go on."

"No," said Tom, "*you* go on. This is very interestin' about Alaska——"

"I, too, met Mrs. Cathcart a few days ago," Kearney interposed.

"Ah, poor little devil," said Tom, again diverted. "Well, there she was at dinner with Lilian. Dare say the little woman was confessin' to her. I'm not sure that I altogether approve ; my wife must be a very broad-minded woman, broader than I thought ; but everything she does is right. Still, puzzlin', even to me. It's like 'em, though. You don't know women, Kearney."

"No," said Kearney. "Well, give my salaams to your *mem-sahib* and say I'll do myself the honour of writing her a good-bye as soon as we've left England well behind."

TANKS.

Revelations of the Secret History of Their Construction.

Extracts from the Note-Book of a Pioneer.

By SIR ALBERT STERN, K.B.E., C.M.G.

"MOTHER." THE ORIGINAL "TANK."
Photo. Foster & Co.

The writer of this article, who had more to do than any man with the success of the Tanks, here tells how they came into being, and how they had to fight the War Office before they fought the enemy.

SIR ALBERT STERN, K.B.E. C.M.G.
Photo. Russell.

THE IDEA.

August, 1914, to February, 1915.

MY experiences in the Great War may be of interest to a peaceful world in years to come.

In November, 1914, I wrote to Mr. Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, offering to provide and equip an armoured car with crew complete. I saw Captain Sueter, who was in charge of the Armoured Car Division of the R.N.A.S., at the Admiralty, and was given a commission as lieutenant, R.N.V.R. Commander Boothby was our C.O., and Major Hetherington Transport Officer to the division. Major Hetherington asked me to join his staff and to work under his Chief Assistant, Lieutenant Fairer-Smith. I agreed to do so.

Major Hetherington, our transport officer, had distinguished himself in the early days of airships. He was young, and always full of new ideas. He had a great knowledge of motor-cars, although not an engineer, and there was no new invention which he would not eagerly take up and push forward. After discussion among certain officers and civilians about the uselessness of armoured cars, except on roads, and the great strides that had been made in light armour-plate as protection against the German "S" bullet, Major Hetherington got the Duke of Westminster sufficiently interested in the idea of a landship to invite Mr. Winston Churchill to dinner.

BIG WHEELS!

Already, before this, at a supper of three at Murray's Club, Hetherington, James Radley,

and myself, a proposal had been put forward to build a landship with three wheels, each as big as the Great Wheel at Earl's Court. In those days we thought only of crossing the Rhine, and this seemed a solution.

I also remember Hetherington proposing to fire shells at Cologne by having a shell which, when it reached the top of its trajectory, would release a second shell inside it, with planes attached, and this second shell would plane down, making one hundred miles in all. It is strange that the Germans later tried and succeeded in firing about eighty miles, but not in this way.

Mr. Churchill came to the dinner and was delighted with the idea of a cross-country car. He then set up a committee to study the question, and Mr. Eustace Tennyson d'Eyncourt, C.B., the Director of Naval Construction, was appointed chairman on the twenty-fourth of February, 1915. It was to be known as the Landship Committee. When I took over the duties of secretary of the Landship Committee in April, 1915, Mr. d'Eyncourt was directing affairs, assisted by Major Hetherington, who carried out his instructions, with Colonel Crompton as engineer. On June 16th Mr. d'Eyncourt asked me to reorganize the committee on business lines. This was done and approved by Mr. d'Eyncourt.

THE MACHINE KNOWN AS "BIG WILLIE," WHICH EVENTUALLY DEVELOPED INTO THE TANK CALLED "MOTHER."

At this period no Government department would provide any office accommodation for us, so on June 21st, 1915, I took an office at my own expense at 83, Pall Mall, and installed in it my entire organization, which consisted of myself and Mr. Percy Anderson, at that time a petty officer in the Armoured Car Division. A controversy raged on this subject for six months between the Admiralty, the Ministry of Munitions, and the Office of Works. The Admiralty referred to it as a troublesome case, and informed the Office of Works that a temporary lieutenant, Albert G. Stern, R.N.V.R., had straightway proceeded to take an office for himself at 83, Pall Mall, and apparently did not understand the subtleties of the procedure in the Civil Service.

On July 2nd, Squadron 20 of the Royal Naval Armoured Car Division, later to become famous as the "wet nurse" of Tanks, was placed, for this work, under the direction of Mr. d'Eyncourt.

THE EVOLUTION OF "MOTHER."

A number of experiments were made, and in August Mr. Tritton, of Messrs. Foster and Co. of Lincoln, and Lieutenant Wilson had started to draw out a machine on the same lines but of stronger material and better design. On August 26th Mr. Tritton, Lieutenant Wilson, and I viewed the full-sized wooden model of this machine. It was known as the "Tritton" Machine, and later as "Little Willie." On the same day, at a meeting at the White Hart Hotel, Lincoln, we discussed fresh requirements which we had just received from the War Office. They asked that the machine should be able to cross a trench five feet wide with a parapet four feet six inches high. Lieutenant Wilson and Mr. Tritton thereupon started work on a type designed to do this. It would, they told me, require a sixty-foot wheel.

The contour of this sized wheel became more or less the shape of the underside of the new machine, which was called first the "Wilson" Machine, then "Big Willie," and finally "Mother."

This machine, to all intents and purposes, was, and remains, the Heavy Tank of to-day—the Mark V.

TRIALS—AND TRIALS.

September, 1915, to February, 1916.

I have already spoken of the impossibility of finding any Government Department which would give us accommodation. That was only one of our many difficulties. We encountered opposition from all quarters. Manufacturers did not like our type of work. It was all experimental and meant continual cancelling of orders. Then, in July, the Ministry of Munitions took over all inventions in connection with land warfare, and the Admiralty, quite rightly, was unwilling to provide the men for these experiments. This meant the loss of Squadron 20, and without Squadron 20 all our experiments and transport would have stopped.

In August *the whole of the Armoured Car Division was disbanded!*

This disbandment was stopped by the personal intervention of Mr. d'Eyncourt. It was one of the many occasions on which he saved the landships (and future Tanks) from extinction. I also made a personal request to the Minister of Munitions, and was told by him that the Admiralty informed him that the order was to be disregarded.

Mr. Macnamara then suggested, for secrecy's sake, to change the title of the Landships Com-

MR. W. C. TRITTON, JOINT DESIGNER WITH LIEUT. WALTER WILSON OF THE TANK. HIS FIRM BUILT THE FIRST TANK, WHICH WAS, AND REMAINS, TO ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES THE HEAVY TANK OF TO-DAY.

mittee. Mr. d'Eyncourt agreed that it was very desirable to retain secrecy by all means, and proposed to refer to the vessel as a "Water Carrier." In Government offices, committees and departments are always known by their initials. For this reason I, as secretary, considered the proposed title totally unsuitable. In our search for a synonymous term, we changed the words "Water Carrier" to "Tank," and became the "Tank Supply," or "T.S." Committee. This is how these weapons came to be called "Tanks," and the name has now been adopted by all countries in the world.

The first Tank, "Mother," was finished on January 26th, 1916, and sent by train to Hatfield Station, where it was unloaded in the middle of the night and driven up to the special ground in Hatfield Park. A detachment of Squadron 20, under the command of Major Hetherington, had previously been sent to Hatfield.

Colonel Sir Maurice Hankey arranged for Mr. McKenna, Chancellor of the Exchequer, to travel down to the Hatfield trials in my car. I explained to him our ideas of mechanical warfare and its value in the saving of life and shells. After the trials, Mr. McKenna said that it was the best investment he had yet seen, and that if the military approved, all the necessary money would be available.

Mr. Balfour, amongst others, took a ride in the Tank, but was removed by his fellow-Ministers before the machine tried the widest of the trenches. This was a trench more than nine feet wide which Lord Kitchener wished to see it cross, but which it had never attempted before. As Mr. Balfour was being removed feet first through the sponson door, he was heard to remark that he was sure there must be some more artistic method of leaving a Tank!

Sir William Robertson was well satisfied with the machine. He left the ground early, owing to pressing business, but before he went he told me that orders should be immediately given for the construction of several.

On February 8th, His Majesty the King visited Hatfield, when a special demonstration was arranged. He took a ride in the Tank, and said afterwards that he thought such a weapon would be a great asset to the Army possessing a large number.

TAKEN FOR OIL TANKS.

Other people were also very anxious to obtain tanks—but not the kind we were building. The secret of our work was very well kept in the Ministry of Munitions, not even the Inquiry Office being in possession of the true facts. This had its disadvantages, however, and caused us unnecessary work, for very frequently we had inquiries from enthusiastic manufacturers of gas, oil, and water tanks who were anxious to secure orders in their own particular lines.

On one occasion a Staff officer at the War Office rang us up and asked if we were the "Tank" Department. On being told that we were, he asked when delivery of his oil tanks might be expected. He was politely informed that we could not tell him, as we were not building oil tanks. He then asked what sort of tanks we were interested in—gas or water—and on receiving the reply that we were interested in neither, he got very much annoyed, and banged his telephone-receiver down.

Colonel Swinton, who was acting at this time as Assistant Secretary to the Committee of

LIEUT. WALTER G. WILSON, RESPONSIBLE WITH MR. TRITTON FOR THE DESIGNING AND MAKING OF THE EARLIEST TANKS.

Photo. Whitlock & Sons.

Imperial Defence, was entrusted with the task of raising and training a corps to man the Tanks, and a camp was taken at Thetford, in Norfolk. It was kept a great secret, and the whole ground,

several miles in extent, was surrounded by armed guards. Several displays were given there during the summer, and live six-pounder shells were used. The King, Mr. Lloyd George, and Sir William Robertson were among those who saw our displays; and in June Colonel Estienne, who later on was to command the French Tanks, visited the camp.

CONAN DOYLE'S OPINION.

About this time Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was writing to the Press and pointing out that unnecessary casualties were caused by making frontal attacks on German machine-guns with unprotected infantry. He suggested that light armour should be worn, and that the authorities were wasting lives by not using it.

Mr. Montagu asked me to see him and to show him that we were doing something still better to protect the infantry by mechanical means from mechanical guns. He was very much interested in our developments.

From that time I kept in close touch with him, knowing his great knowledge of the history of war. I told him that our idea was that once we had Tanks in large numbers we could bring back the element of surprise which was now entirely lacking in the attack. Although he believed in mechanical warfare, he doubted this. He doubted it until the battle of Cambrai, in November, 1917, when he wrote to me :—

SIR EUSTACE D'EYNCOURT, CHAIRMAN OF THE LAND-SHIP COMMITTEE, FORMED TO CONSIDER THE BUILDING OF TANKS.
Photo, Russell

" Windlesham, Crowborough, Sussex,
" November 22nd.

" My Dear Stern,—I think your tactical ideas have been brilliantly vindicated by this battle, and that you should have warm congratulations from all who know the facts.

" Yours very truly,
" A. Conan Doyle."

It was decided that in September Tanks should go to France. The Tanks at Thetford were entrained at night and taken by rail to Avonmouth. There they were shipped to Havre, taken to a village near Abbeville, and from there sent up to a point fifteen miles behind the line. Moving Tanks was in those days a very difficult business. The sponsons, each weighing tons, had to be unbolted and put on separate trucks, and in that journey from Thetford to the Front this process was gone through five times. The first party of the men of the Heavy Machine Gun Corps crossed to France on August 13th. Other parties followed, and on September 15th, seven months after the first order was given by Mr. Lloyd George, the Tanks went into action.

TANKS IN ACTION.

September, 1916, to October, 1916.

The Tanks were already in France and waiting to go into battle, but the secret had been well kept—how well was shown by a thing that happened on the very morning in September when I was leaving for the Somme, for the first Tank action.

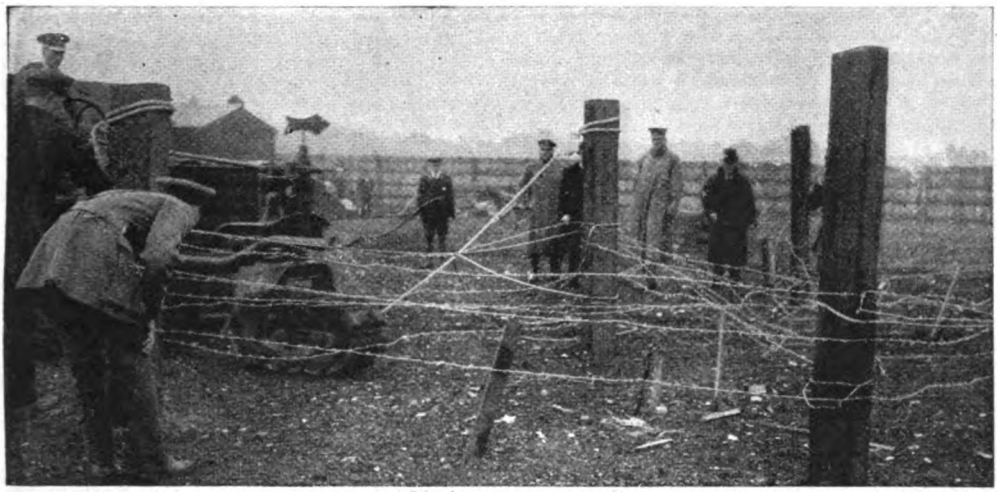
A Civil servant, an assistant secretary, came to see me on this eventful morning just as I was starting. He told me that as my department was of no real importance, since he had no knowledge what it was, he had arranged that during the next Sunday all my papers and drawings were to be moved out into a small flat in a back street opposite the Hotel Metropole.

This was no time to argue; my train left in a few minutes; once more the famous Squadron 20 to the rescue. I told him that the department could not move, as it was concerned in matters of the greatest national importance, and would require before long a very large building of its own. This had no effect on him, so I gave instructions to one of my officers in his presence to put an armed guard on my office while I was away, and to resist any attack. Should the assistant secretary make an attempt he was to be arrested, taken to Squadron 20's headquarters at Wembley, tied to a stake for twenty-four hours, and the reason carefully explained to all and sundry, especially newspaper reporters.

Fortunately for him no attempt was made, but on my return we were offered, amongst other buildings, the Colonial Institute and the Union Club. Finally we took Nos. 14, 17, and 19, Cockspur Street, and even these blocks of buildings proved too small.

I arrived late at night on September 16th at Beauquesne (advanced headquarters), and found that an old friend of mine, Major A. H. Wood, was town major. Here I met Colonel Elles, who originally came to Hatfield for the B.E.F., and from him I learnt of the great victory of the Tanks the day before.

On Sunday, the 17th, Sir Douglas Haig appeared in front of General Butler's offices and congratulated Colonel Swinton and me. He said, " We have had the greatest victory since the Battle of the Marne. We have taken more prisoners and more territory, with comparatively few casualties. This is due to the Tanks. Wherever the Tanks advanced we took our objectives, and where they did not advance, we failed to take our objectives." He added: " Colonel Swinton, you shall be Head of the Tank Corps; Major Stern, you shall be Head of the Construction of Tanks. Go back and make as many more Tanks as you can. We thank



THE FIRST TANK FITTED WITH WIRE-CUTTING APPARATUS—IN THE BACKGROUND MR. LLOYD GEORGE AND MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL ARE SEEN WATCHING THE EXPERIMENT. (SEE ALSO PICTURE ON NEXT PAGE.)

you." Immediately after my return we were ordered to build a thousand Tanks.

The mere tactical record of what the Tanks did at Flers and Guendecourt gives no idea of the moral effect of the first appearance of this new and strange weapon. It astonished and terrified the enemy. It astonished, delighted, and amused its friends. War correspondents vied with each other to find the vivid, unexpected word that would do justice to its half-terrible, half-comic strangeness (and yet give away no secrets), and the humorists of the battalions sharpened their wits on it. They communicated their gaiety, through their letters, to the people at home. The jolliest, most fantastic of them all was a letter from a soldier to his sweetheart, which appeared in the newspapers at the time. It could not be left out of an article on Tanks :—

A TOMMY ON TANKS.

"They can do up prisoners in bundles like straw-binders, and, in addition, have an adaption of a printing machine, which enables them to catch the Huns, fold, count, and deliver them in quires, every thirteenth man being thrown out a little further than the others. The Tanks can truss refractory prisoners like fowls prepared for cooking, while their equipment renders it possible for them to charge into a crowd of Huns and, by shooting out spokes like porcupine quills, carry off an opponent on each. Though 'stuck-up' the prisoners are, needless to say, by no means proud of their position.

"They can chew up barbed wire and turn it into munitions. As they run they slash their tails and clear away trees, houses, howitzers, and anything else in the vicinity. They turn over on their backs and catch live shells in their caterpillar feet, and they can easily be adapted as submarines; in fact, most of them crossed the Channel in this guise. They loop the loop, travel forwards, sideways, and backwards, not only with equal speed but at the same time. They spin round like a top, only far more quickly, dig themselves in, bury themselves, scoop out a tunnel, and come out again ten miles away in half an hour."

It was another soldier's letter home which, for a short time, made us fear that in spite of all our precautions German agents had copied some of our plans. One day, the Secret Service told me that they thought they were about to catch a spy. Drawings of a Tank had been found in an envelope marked with a name, but with no address, in a pillar-box in Glasgow. We thought this discovery would certainly lead to a blank wall and a firing party, but the facts were much more odd than we could ever have imagined.

A servant-girl came to the post-office and said that she had been asked by her mistress to take two letters, one to deliver at another house in the street and the other to post. By mistake, she had dropped the one for post into the letter-box of the house, and the one for the house in the pillar-box. This was the unaddressed letter with the drawings of the Tank. Her mistress was then interviewed and said that the drawings had been sent back to her from France by the Government. They were, apparently, sketches made by her son before he was killed in battle. She had no use for the sketches, and so had put them in an envelope and sent them to a friend of her son, who had worked with him in the same Engineering Works.

MR H. G. WELLS ON THE TANKS.

A little later on I took Mr. Wells to Birmingham to show him how his idea had at last been realized. He wrote an article on what he saw, prophesying, as only he could, what would come of these new weapons, and urging that the factories should not be robbed of the men who

could build them. At the time the article was forbidden by the Censor. I will quote from it his description of the Tanks. It was one of the earliest authentic descriptions written at a time when so much was appearing in print that was entertaining but untrue :—

TANKS.

"October, 1916.

"The young of even the most humble beasts have something piquant and engaging about them, and so I suppose it is in the way of things that the l nd ironclad, which opens a new and more dreadful and destructive phase in the human folly of warfare, should appear first as if it were a joke. Never has any such thing so completely masked its wickedness under an appearance of g nial silliness. The Tank is a creature to which one naturally flings a pet name ; the five or six I was shown wandering, rooting, and climbing over obstacles round a large field near X, were as amusing and disarming as a litter of lively young pigs.

"In a little while there will probably be pictures of these things available for the public ; in the meanwhile, I may perhaps give them a word of description. They are like large slugs ; with an underside a little like the flattened rockers of a rocking horse ; slugs between twenty and forty feet long, they are like flat-sided slugs, slugs with spirit, who raise an inquiring snout, like the snout of a dogfish, into the air. They crawl upon their bellies in a way that would be tedious to describe to the inquiring specialist. They go over the ground with the sliding speed of active snails. Behind them trail two wheels supporting a flimsy tail, wheels that strike one as incongruous as if a monster began kangaroo and ended doll's perambulator. (These wheels annoy me.) They are not steely monsters ; they are painted the drab and unassuming colours that are fashionable in modern warfare, so that the armour seems rather like the integument of a rhinoceros. At the sides of the head project armoured cheeks, and from above these stick out guns that look very like stalked eyes. That is the general appearance of the contemporary Tank.

"It slides on the ground ; the silly little wheels that so detract from the genial bestiality of its appearance dangle and bump behind it. It swings round about its axis. It comes to an obstacle, a low wall, let us say, or a heap of bricks, and sets to work to climb with its snout. It rears over the obstacle, it raises its straining belly, it overhangs more and more, and at last topples forward ; it sways upon the heap and then goes plunging downwards, sticking out the weak counterpoise of its wheeled tail. If it comes to a house or a tree or a wall or such-like obstruction it rams against it so as to bring all its weight to bear upon it—it weighs *some* tons—and then climbs over the *débris*. I saw it, and incredulous soldiers of experience watched it at the same time, cross trenches and wallow amazingly through muddy exaggerations of shell holes. Then I repeated the tour inside.

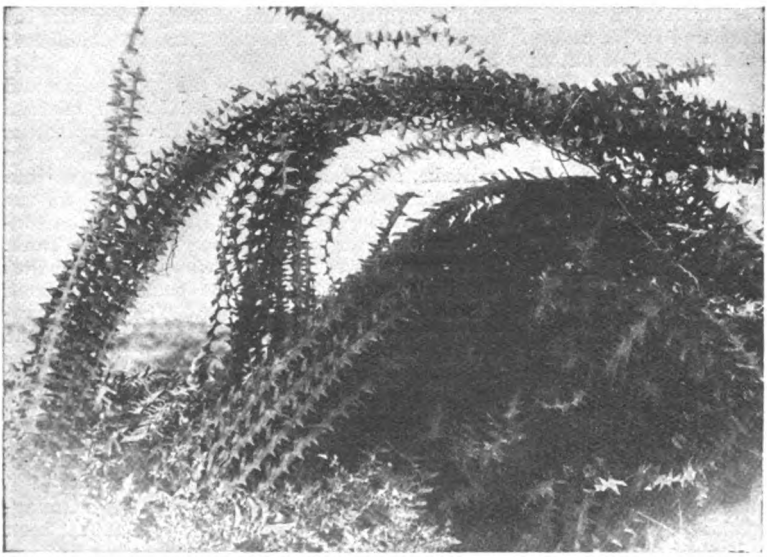
"Again the Tank is like the slug. The slug, as every biological student knows, is unexpectedly complicated inside. The Tank is as crowded with inward parts as a battleship. It is filled with engines, guns and ammunition, and, in the interstices, men.

"'You will smash your hat,' said Colonel Stern.

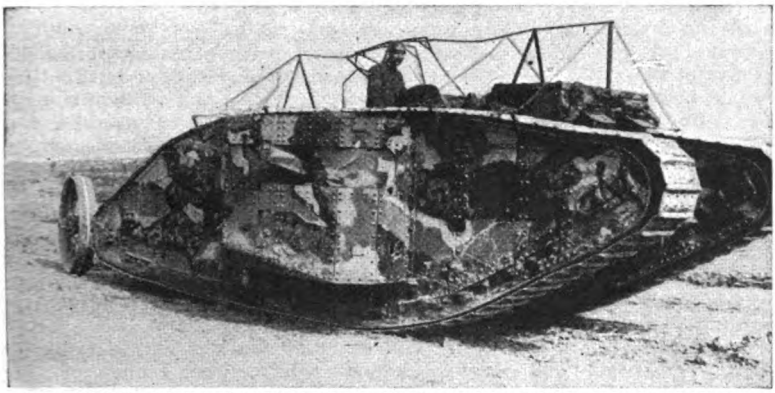
"'No, keep it on, or else you will smash your head.'

"Only Mr. C. R. W. Nevinson could do justice to the interior of a Tank. You see a hand gripping something ; you see the eyes and forehead of an engineer's face ; you perceive that an overall blueishness beyond the engine is the back of another man. 'Don't hold that,' says someone. 'It is too hot. Hold on to that.' The engines roar, so loudly that I doubt whether one could hear guns without ; the floor begins to slope and slopes until one seems 'to be at forty-five degrees or thereabouts ; then the whole concern swings up and sways and slants the other way.

"You have crossed a



INSTEAD OF THE THIN STRANDS OF WIRE SHOWN IN THE PREVIOUS ILLUSTRATION, THIS IS THE KIND OF OBSTACLE THE TANKS HAD EVENTUALLY TO CUT THEIR WAY THROUGH.



THE FIRST PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN OF A TANK—WITH ITS ELABORATE CAMOUFLAGE—GOING INTO ACTION: 1916.

bank. You heel sideways. Through the door which has been left open you see the little group of engineers, staff officers, and naval men receding and falling away behind you. You straighten up and go up hill. You halt and begin to rotate. Through the open door, the green field with its red walls, rows of worksheds and forests of chimneys in the background, begins a steady processional movement. The group of engineers and officers and naval men appears at the other side of the door and further off. Then comes a sprint down hill. You descend and stretch your legs.

"About the field other Tanks are doing their stunts. One is struggling in an apoplectic way in the mud pit with a cheek half buried. It noses its way out and on with an air of animal relief.

"They are like jokes by Heath Robinson. One forgets that these things have already saved the lives of many hundreds of our soldiers and smashed and defeated thousands of Germans.

"Said one soldier to me: 'In the old attacks you used to see the British dead lying outside the machine gun emplacements like birds outside a butt with a good shot inside. *Now*, these things walk through.'"

MORE CHECKS.

On October 10th I received an official instruction from the Army Council cancelling the order for a thousand Tanks.

All the manufacturers who had had any experience of the methods of the Tank Department up till then had worked with the greatest enthusiasm. This sudden cancellation came as a thunderbolt. I immediately went to see Mr. Lloyd George, the Secretary of State for War. He said that he had heard nothing of the instruction. I told him that I had, with enormous difficulty, started swinging this huge weight, and that I could not possibly stop it now. I told him that he could cancel my appointment, but he could not possibly get me to cancel the orders I had placed. Sir William Robertson, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, then appeared, and Mr. Lloyd George said that he could not understand how this order could be cancelled without his knowledge, since he was President of the Army Council. He asked me to tell Sir William Robertson what I had told him. This I did. Excusing myself owing to pressure of work, I then left the room.

The order for the production of a thousand Tanks was reinstated next day.

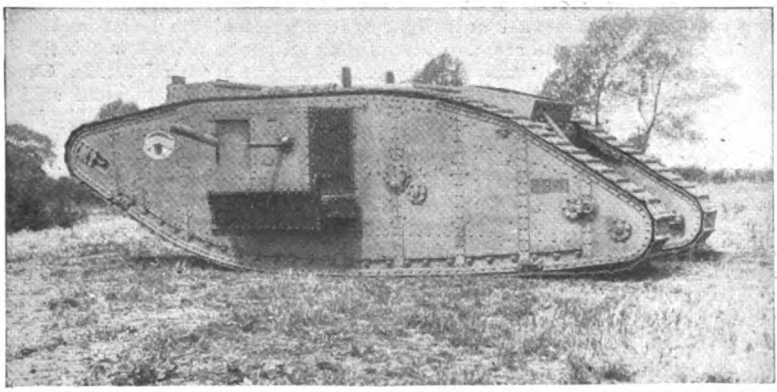
PRODUCTION ON A LARGE SCALE.

October, 1916, *to April*, 1917.

General Anley, who had commanded a brigade in the Mons retreat, now took command of the Tanks in England. He had a keen sense of humour. One day a bombastic Lieut.-Colonel of Tanks came into my office when the General was there. "When shall I get my Tanks?" said the bombastic officer. "The Commander-in-Chief is awfully annoyed that I have not got any yet."

"This," said the General, turning to me, "reminds me of the fly on the elephant's trunk apologizing for its weight."

In the early days we found it very hard to get any staff at all, for the Army refused to allow us men of military age. It was very necessary, however, that we should secure the services of



THE TANK PRESENTED BY MR. EU TONG SEN, WHICH HAD A LARGE EYE PAINTED ON EACH SIDE OF ITS BOW.

Photo, Foster & Co.

a good Transport Officer to superintend the transport of Tanks from the manufacturers to Tank Headquarters in France, a man with business experience and a man of the world. I asked Mr. George Grossmith if he would undertake this work. He was over military age, but jumped at the idea of being able to help in any way, and accepted at once. He was given a commission in the R.N.V.R. under the Admiralty, and did valuable work from the time of his joining up in November, 1916, till the date of the armistice. Since he was an actor, many attacks were made on him by jealous people. It was on the occasion of one of these attacks that I was called to the Admiralty to explain what he was doing for my department. I told them, and his work was heartily approved. The official whom I saw sent for the file of papers relating to his commission. He told a clerk who had been at the Admiralty some forty years to look it up. "Under what heading?" said the clerk. "Ministry of Munitions," was the reply. "Did you say Ministry of Musicians?" said this clerk of forty years' experience, looking very puzzled.

MAJOR-GENERAL E. D. SWINTON, WHO NEVER GAVE THE WAR OFFICE ANY REST UNTIL THE TANKS WERE ADOPTED.

THE CHINESE "EYE."

At the beginning of March, Mr. Eu Tong Sen, a member of the Federal Council of the Malay States, offered £6,000 for the purchase of a Tank, which the Army Council gratefully accepted on behalf of His Majesty's Government. The Tank selected was one built by Messrs. Foster and Co., at Lincoln, and had a plate put on it with the following inscription:—

"Presented to H.M. Government by Mr. Eu Tong Sen, member of the Federal Council of the Malay States, on March 10th, 1917."

All Chinese ships and boats, large or small, have a large "eye" painted at each side of the bow. The Chinese explanation of the custom is: "No have eyes, how can see?" It seemed only right that this "landship" also should see, and accordingly an eye was painted on each side of its bow.

FIGHTING THE WAR OFFICE.

May, 1917, to September, 1917.

In May, 1917, Sir Douglas Haig wrote a letter to Lord Derby, the Secretary of State for War, in which he said that the importance of Tanks was firmly established and that there should be a special department at the War Office to look after them.

A Committee was therefore set up, with General Capper as Chairman. On July 27th, Sir Eustace d'Eyncourt and I ceased to attend the meetings of this Committee. We found that the three military members, *who a month before had never even seen a Tank*, laid down all rulings even with regard to design and production. They were in the majority and we could do nothing.

Instead of orders being given for thousands of Tanks, as I had hoped, Mr. Churchill told me that the requirements for the Army for 1918 were to be one thousand three hundred and fifty fighting Tanks. This I determined to fight with every means in my power, and I told Mr. Churchill so. I then had an interview with Sir William Robertson, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, and told him that the proposed preparations for 1918 were wholly and entirely inadequate. Sir William Robertson replied that this seemed pretty straight. I replied that it was meant to be straight.

Sir William Robertson was extremely polite and shook hands with me when I left.

THE WAR OFFICE GETS ITS WAY.

October, 1917, to November, 1917.

On the 11th of October I asked for an interview with Mr. Churchill in order to put my views before him, for he appeared to be taking the advice of the War Office and not of the pioneers of Mechanical Warfare. I told him that I had served three Ministers of Munitions; that I had had the confidence and support of all three—Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Montagu, and Dr. Addison; that as a result I had done efficient work, and that without his confidence I could not make a success of Mechanical Warfare. He replied that I had his confidence, but that the War Office wanted a change made. The War Office, he said, accused me of lumbering them up with useless Tanks at the Front and of wasting millions of the public money. Here I asked him to go slowly, as I wished to take down this astounding statement. In the opinion of the War Office, he said, there had been a total failure in design, no progress had been made, all the money spent on Tanks had been wasted, and the belief in Mechanical Warfare was now at such a low ebb that they proposed to give it up entirely. Mr. Churchill paid me flattering compliments and said that the country would reward me suitably for my great services.

I told him that I had fought against the forces of reaction from the day when the order for a thousand tanks was cancelled by the Army Council without the knowledge of Mr. Lloyd George, although he was Secretary of State for War, and as a result of my protest was reinstated the next day; that time after time we had saved the War Office from wasting millions of money and going entirely wrong, and that our advice had finally been taken in each case in correction of the War Office's original action. I challenged Mr. Churchill to produce a single case where I had done anything to prevent progress and a free play of ideas, and I

gave him two examples of the way in which I had worked. The transmission in the first Tanks was not very satisfactory. Immediately after the first Tank battle on the Somme I had put in hand every possible design of transmission, that we might discover the best. Again, on March 7th, 1917, I proposed to Dr. Addison to take over Sir William Tritton and Messrs. Foster's factory solely for experimental work, but Dr. Addison was unable to agree to this, as the future of Tanks was at that time too doubtful.

On October 15th I was told by Sir Arthur Duckham that three Generals at the War Office had asked for my removal.

The whole trouble with the War Office was that I had pressed for a large programme of Tanks, at least four thousand for the fighting of 1918, but the Committee against which we had continually protested, with its War Office majority of Generals who knew nothing of Tanks, had overruled me. Now, at a time when the decisions of experts were absolutely necessary in preparation for 1918, and when it was clear to us that enormous quantities of Tanks were needed, the War Office programme was for one thousand three hundred and fifty Tanks. Mr. Churchill told me that he agreed with Sir Eustace d'Eyncourt and me that quantities of Tanks were necessary for 1918, but as Minister of Munitions he could not argue with the Generals at the War Office about their requirements; his business simply was to supply what they wanted. This appeared to us a crying shame. We knew the thousands of casualties that the Tanks had already saved in the attacks on the German machine gun positions.

Next day, Sir E. d'Eyncourt and I asked for an interview with Mr. Churchill. He refused to see Sir E. d'Eyncourt and told me that, with regret, he had decided to appoint a new man in my place, and, therefore, there was no object in discussing the situation. He added that he was in power, and, therefore, it was his responsibility, and that he had taken the advice of the Council Member, Sir Arthur Duckham. I told him that I would not resign, as I believed it to be against the public interest, but that he could dismiss me.

Next day I received the following letter from him:—

"Ministry of Munitions.
"Whitehall Place, S.W.
"October 16th, 1917.

"DEAR COLONEL STERN,—As I told you in our conversation on Friday, I have decided, upon the advice of the Member of Council in whose group your department is, and after very careful consideration of all the circumstances, to make a change in the headship of the Mechanical Warfare Supply Department.

"I propose therefore to appoint Vice-Admiral Sir Gordon Moore to succeed you and this appointment will be announced in the next two or three days.

"I shall be glad to hear from you without delay whether those other aspects of activity in connection with the development of Tanks in France and America, on which Sir Arthur Duckham has spoken to you, commend themselves to you.

"Meanwhile, I must ask you to continue to discharge your duties until such time as you are relieved.

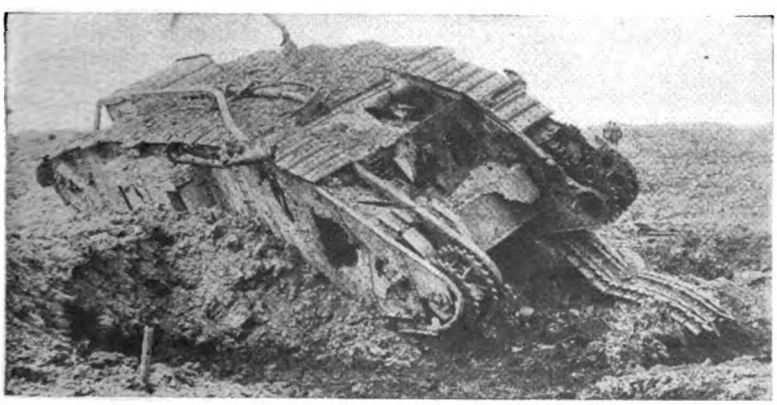
"Yours very truly,
"WINSTON S. CHURCHILL."

I had an interview with Sir Arthur Duckham on the same day, and he told me that Mr. Churchill was unable to persuade the War Office to have a larger number of Tanks, but that as he was a believer in Mechanical Warfare, it was his opinion that America should be persuaded to arm herself with the necessary number of Tanks for next year's fighting.

He told me that Mr. Churchill considered it my duty, as the War Office did not wish to develop Mechanical Warfare on a large scale, to undertake its development among the Allies and chiefly the Americans. At this time I also saw the Prime Minister and said that I was willing to undertake any duties which the country might call upon me to perform.

On October 29th I accepted the position of Commissioner for Mechanical Warfare (Overseas and Allies). On the same day I warned Mr. Churchill once more that the progress of design and the output of the Tanks would most surely suffer. In the meantime, Admiral Sir A. G. H. W. Moore had been appointed the Controller of the Mechanical Warfare Department.

Up to the date of his appointment, Admiral Moore had never even seen a Tank!



THE KIND OF GROUND TANKS HAD TO TACKLE.

Photo. E. Northey.

THE TANKS COME INTO THEIR OWN.

On April 8th, 1918, Lord Milner, who up till this time had been Cabinet Minister at Versailles, and was now appointed Secretary of State for War, came to see me at the offices of the Mechanical Warfare (Overseas and Allies) Department in Paris. I explained to him the development of Mechanical Warfare and told him that the Tanks had great power of destruction quite out of proportion to their own total cost of humanity, which was limited to eight men a Tank. I told him that a special department, like the Air Ministry, should be formed, and that this Ministry or Board should be managed by those who had directed the development from the beginning. In this way a highly technical development could be carried out by a practical man with the advice of the military authorities.

I explained that I had been removed from my position on the demand of the War Office because I had fought for the development of Mechanical Warfare and told the War Office that their preparations for 1918 were entirely inadequate; that the programme had now been increased, too late, from one thousand three hundred and fifty to nearer five thousand; that I had fought for the standardization of Mechanical Warfare against continual change of design, and that standardization was at last to be brought in by August, 1918—again too late.

I said that we had fought our hardest to prevent inexperienced officers from ruining the one development in this country in which we had outstripped the Germans, but that instead of continuing its healthy growth under imaginative practical men, it had been placed under the heel of elderly Service men, with the usual results; that the modern methods of standardization and efficiency, untrammelled by Army procedure and prejudice, had been stamped out; that the rules of the War Office made a civilian ineligible ever to become a soldier or to know anything about warfare, and that the Army Act was waved before the eyes of any junior officer who had ideas and dared to speak of them.

Finally, I begged him to see Sir Eustace d'Eyncourt and to discuss the question of some proper authority to control and develop Mechanical Warfare.

From this date a new era of progress started for Mechanical Warfare at the War Office, with Sir Henry Wilson as Chief of the Imperial General Staff and General Harrington as Deputy Chief.

WHAT THE HUNS THOUGHT OF THE TANKS.

What did the Germans think of the Tanks? It is credibly reported that when Hindenburg visited the German Tank centre near Charleroi in February, 1918, he said, "I do not think that Tanks are any use, but as these have been made they may as well be tried." That he said this was certainly believed in the German Tank Corps, which was not much encouraged thereby, and, if he said it, he only repeated what Lord Kitchener had said of our Tanks three years before, when he first saw them at Hatfield.

Other German Generals believed in them if Hindenburg did not, and the Commander of the 17th German Army said of them: "Our Tanks strengthen the moral of the infantry to a tremendous extent even if used only in small numbers, and experience has shown that they have a considerable moral effect on hostile infantry."

The great allied attack had only just begun when the German Government showed that it recognized the growing danger of the new weapon. Speaking in the Reichstag for the Minister of War, at the time of the battle of Amiens, General von Wrisberg said, "The American armies need not terrify us. We shall settle with them. More momentous for us is the question of Tanks." Then just before the end this message from the Prussian Minister of War was sent out: "The superiority of the enemy at present is principally due to their use of Tanks. We have been actively engaged for a long time in working at producing this weapon (which is recognized as important) in adequate numbers. We shall then have an additional means for the continuance of the war if we are compelled to continue it."

So one of the last efforts to hearten the German people was a promise of Tanks.

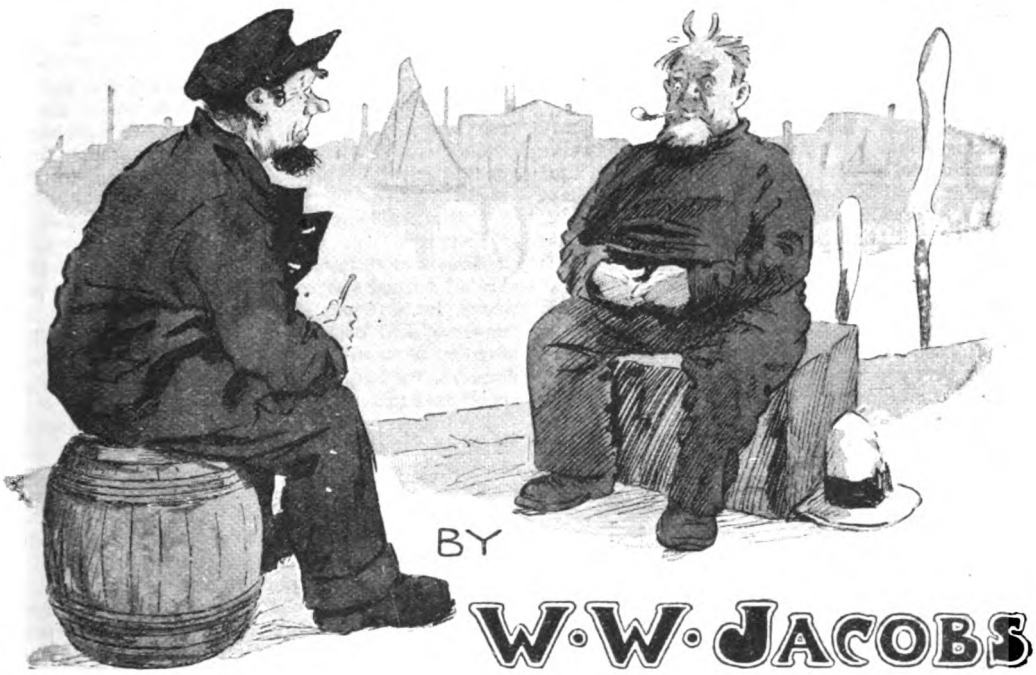
But it is not with any reluctant tribute from a German that I wish to end this story of how we built the Tanks. I have already quoted the British Commander-in-Chief's first words on them: "Wherever the Tanks advanced we took our objectives, and where they did not advance we failed to take our objectives." His last words, in his despatch of December 21st, 1918, are these:—

> "Since the opening of our offensive on 8th August, Tanks have been employed in every battle, and the importance of the part played by them in breaking the resistance of the German infantry can scarcely be exaggerated. The whole scheme of the attack of the 8th August was dependent upon Tanks, and ever since that date on numberless occasions the success of our infantry has been powerfully assisted or confirmed by their timely arrival. So great has been the effect produced upon the German infantry by the appearance of British Tanks that in more than one instance, when for various reasons real Tanks were not available in sufficient numbers, valuable results have been obtained by the use of dummy Tanks painted on frames of wood and canvas.
>
> "It is no disparagement of the courage of our infantry or of the skill and devotion of our artillery to say that the achievements of those essential arms would have fallen short of the full measure of success achieved by our armies had it not been for the very gallant and devoted work of the Tank Corps, under the command of Major-General H. J. Elles."

What we had claimed that the Tanks could do, they have done.

[*A full account of the Tanks will appear in a book by Sir Albert Stern, to be published shortly by Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton.*]

ARTFUL CARDS



BY

W. W. JACOBS

Illustrated by Will Owen.

GAMBLING I don't 'old with, said the night-watchman, pursing his lips. There's gamblers and gamblers. There's people like myself as does it now and then out of good-nature to oblige, and there's people like that squint-eyed, ginger-whiskered mate on the *Queen Mary*. If he 'ad spent as much time learning good manners as he 'as learning the three-card trick, it would ha' been better for both of us. Especially me.

He ain't the only one. I remember teaching draughts to a man I met one evening. He was a born fool to look at, and 'e looked just the same when 'e bid me "Good-night" with seven-and-six o' mine in 'is pocket. I 'eard arterwards that he could do anything with draughts except make 'em speak.

Most sailormen like a bit of a flutter. One chap I knew used to spend all his time ashore backing 'orses. When 'e lost, 'e lost, and when he won the bookie used to get lost. And the only time he did get his winnings he got fourteen days for the way 'e spent 'em.

I remember one time when old Sam Small got a perfeck craze for playing cards. His idea was to make some money for 'is old age, and, instead of going out and enjoying 'imself with Ginger Dick and Peter Russet, he sat all day in the bedroom being taught by a young professional sharper 'e met in the Three Widders. He even learnt 'ow to do the three-card trick—arter a fashion—and came round to show me one evening. We played for ha'pennies at fust, and I lost seven right off. Then we played for bobs, and it seemed as if I couldn't lose. I never see anybody so puzzled as Sam was, and then 'e turned round and said he'd been doing it all wrong, and asked for 'is money back. I 'ad to be firm with 'im—for his own sake.

A man never knows 'is best friends. If he'd kept on playing cards with me, it would ha' been better for both of us; instead o' that, he preferred to let strangers win 'is money. He used to take 'em to his bedroom, and one night Ginger couldn't get to bed because three or four of 'em had 'ad it for a card-table and spilt a can of beer in it.

He could have 'ad two beds next night, 'cos to their surprise Sam didn't come 'ome. He was still missing when they went out to brekfuss next morning, and by the time arternoon came Ginger began to feel uneasy about 'im.

Copyright, 1910, by W. W. Jacobs.

"Mark my words," he ses to Peter Russet, "he's been and gorn and got into some trouble."

"Any fool could see that," ses Peter. "'Ow much money 'ad he got on 'im? Besides the eight quid you are minding for 'im?"

Ginger shook his 'ead. "It's my belief he's been made away with," he ses, jingling the money in his trowsis-pocket. "It all comes of 'im thinking he can play cards."

"P'r'aps I'd better mind 'arf of the money, in case you get robbed," ses Peter.

Ginger didn't hear 'im. He was too busy thinking about pore Sam. By the time twelve o'clock came, and no Sam, they felt certain that something had 'appened to 'im, and Ginger kept Peter awake 'arf the night talking to 'im about the 'appy times the three of them had 'ad together.

"I suppose we must go out and try and eat something," he ses next morning, shaking his 'ead.

"I s'pose so," ses Peter, very sorrowful; "but it's wasting good money."

They went downstairs very slow, and opened the door just as Sam's friend wot taught 'im 'ow to play cards knocked on it. Sharp-faced young chap 'e was, with 'is eyes 'arf-closed and a fag stuck in the corner of 'is mouth.

"'Ullo, Ginger," he ses, nodding.

"Wot do you want?" ses Ginger, sniffing at 'im.

"I've got a letter for you," he ses.

Ginger held out his 'and for it and, arter speaking sharp to Peter Russet about good manners, stood reading it as though he couldn't believe 'is eyesight.

"It's from Sam," he ses, at last. "He's lost all 'is money at cards, as I knew 'e would; and 'e wants me to send 'im five quid."

"Wot 'e owes," ses the young chap.

"He can go on owing it, then," ses Ginger, very firm. "If 'e wants 'is five quid let 'im come and fetch it."

"He can't," ses the young chap.

"Can't? Why not?" ses Ginger, turning on 'im.

"He's lost other things besides money," ses the chap. "He played the last two hands in 'is shirt and cap, and 'e can't come 'ome in *them*. 'Ow would you like it yourself? Besides, think of the cold!"

"Shirt and cap?" ses Ginger, staring at 'im.

"He made 'imself a skirt out of a tater-sack this morning," ses the young chap. "It's a tight fit—still, it's better than nothing."

"All right," ses Ginger, arter a few words on the quiet with Peter Russet, "we'll come with you and see wot can be done. Where is he?"

"Find out," ses the chap. "Why don't you give me the money same as your pal tells you to? Wot are you wasting time like this for? It's his money. He 'asn't 'ad nothing to eat since yesterday arternoon. D'you want 'im to starve?"

Ginger led Peter away again.

"We'll lay low and foller 'im 'ome," he ses, in a whisper.

"Wot about brekfuss?" ses Peter. "I want mine something cruel."

"Plenty o' time," ses Ginger. "Think o' pore Sam; nothing to eat since yesterday arternoon."

He turned back to the young man, wot was doing a double-shuffle on the pavement and looking up at the chimbley-pots.

"Why don't you tell us where 'e is?" he ses, in a sharp voice.

"Fancy," ses the chap, lighting another fag.

"You won't get no five pounds out o' me," ses Ginger. "Come along, Peter; we'll go back indoors and wait for Sam to come home. You go and tell 'im wot I said," he ses, turning to the chap.

"Right-o," ses the young feller, turning away. "So long!"

They stood peeping out of the doorway till he 'ad turned the corner, and then they set off arter 'im. It was easy work in a way, 'cos he never looked behind 'im; but 'e seemed to be fonder o' walking than wot they was, and besides, as Peter said, no doubt he had 'ad a good brekfuss afore 'e started.

"P'r'aps he ain't going 'ome," ses Ginger, looking puzzled. "This is the third time he 'as been in the Minories."

They followed 'im into Tower Street—it was on'y the second time they 'ad been there—and then to their thankfulness he turned into a pub. They went in too—into another bar—and Ginger 'ad just ordered two pints in a whisper, and paid for 'em, when the chap finished his beer and walked out. Pore Ginger didn't even 'ave time to taste his, and the one mouthful Peter 'ad time to take went the wrong way. It was a big mouthful, and for a couple o' minutes he thought it was 'is last. Then he got 'is breath back, and, arter asking the landlord whether he thought 'e was beating carpets, went out to look for Ginger. He caught 'im up arter a time, and they went on walking till they felt ready to drop.

"I believe 'e knows we are follering 'im," ses Peter.

They went on for another 'arf hour, and then to Peter's joy they saw the chap, arter standing a long time looking at the things in a cook-shop winder, go inside.

"He's going to 'ave his dinner," he ses, "and while he's 'aving it we'll go and 'ave some bread and cheese and beer."

"And suppose he slips out while we're away?" ses Ginger.

"Well, we'll go one at a time," ses Peter.

"No, we won't," ses Ginger. "I ain't going to lose 'im arter all this trouble, and when we *do* find out where 'e lives I might want your help."

They stood outside waiting for over a hour, and then the young feller came out wiping his mouth on the back of his 'and. He stood for a moment looking up and down the street till 'is eyes fell on Ginger, wot was trying to get behind Peter, and Peter wot was trying to get behind Ginger.

"'Ullo," he ses, coming up. "Fancy dropping acrost you agin like this! 'Ave you been 'aving a little walk to stretch your legs?"

"Yes; and we ain't finished yet," ses Ginger, very fierce.

"I'll come with you, if you like," ses the chap. "I ain't proud."

"When we want your company we'll ask you for it," ses Peter.

"Don't get cross," ses the young feller, pretending to shiver. "'Cos if you do I might get frightened and *run*. Last time I was frightened by a ugly face I run three miles without stopping."

He lit a fag and stood there with 'is eyes 'arf closed, blowing smoke through 'is nose. Peter and Ginger stood there, waiting while 'e smoked two of 'em, and then waited outside a tobacco-shop while 'e went in to buy another packet. He got larky arter coming out, and when 'e tried to strike a match on Ginger's trowsis people 'ad to step off the pavement 'cos Ginger was using it all.

He moved off with Peter as he saw a policeman coming along, and then to their surprise they found that the young feller was following *them*. It upset their ideas altogether, and all of a sudden Ginger stopped and turned on him.

"Why don't you go 'ome?" he ses.

"Wot's the good without the money?" ses the chap. "Wot's the good of going back and telling a starving old man in a tater-sack that his pals won't help 'im?"

"Why can't we take it to 'im?" ses Peter.

"He wouldn't like it," ses the chap. "He said so. Besides, when you got there you might try and get 'im out without paying."

"Well, we'll give you the money now, and then come with you," ses Ginger.

"Why couldn't you sayso afore?" ses the other. "'Ere we've been wasting the whole morning for nothing."

They all went into a pub and arter Ginger and Peter had 'ad a pint or two, and a crust o' bread and cheese, Ginger handed over the money and they all went out together, with the young man in the middle. Ginger's opinion of 'im went up as they walked along, and, when he led 'em into another pub a little further on, and asked 'em wot they would 'ave, he got to feel quite a liking for 'im.

They 'ad a pint each, and, while Peter was resting 'arf-way through his, the young man thought 'e saw a spider drop into it. Ginger 'elped Peter to look for it but they couldn't find it, and arter that they wasted a lot of time looking for the young man, but they couldn't find 'im neither.

"If you'd kept your eye on 'im instead o' fishing round in my beer with your dirty finger, it 'ud ha' been better," ses Peter.

They walked 'ome, quarrelling all the way, and then they sat indoors all the evening waiting for Sam to turn up so as they could tell 'im wot they thought of 'im.

They sat there till eleven o'clock, and then they went to bed wondering wot had 'appened to 'im; and when they got up next morning Ginger said he 'ad a feeling that they should never see 'im again.

"He's gorn where we've all got to go," he ses, shaking his 'ead.

"Unless we join the Salvation Army," ses Peter. "There's plenty o' time afore we get to his age."

"He's been made away with, that's my opinion," ses Ginger. "We shall never see 'im agin, any more than we shall see that monkey-faced chap that gave us the slip yesterday."

"GINGER 'ELPED PETER TO LOOK FOR THE SPIDER, BUT THEY COULDN'T FIND IT."

They went downstairs to go out and get some brekfuss, and the very fust thing they saw was the young feller, leaning up agin the wall, smoking a fag.

"'Ullo!" he ses. "Did you find the spider?"

Ginger couldn't answer 'im for a minute. He stood there staring at him as if he was a ghost.

"Wot did you run off for?" he ses, at last, growling at 'im.

"Me?" ses the other. "I didn't run off. But I thought that if pore old Sam 'ad to wait till you found that spider he'd never get 'is money."

"Is he alive?" ses Peter.

"*Alive?*" ses the young feller. "I on'y 'ope I

shall be arf as lively at 'is age as wot he is. I've got another letter for you."

He fished it out of 'is pocket and handed it to Ginger, and then stood sucking his teeth and looking at the winder opposite while Ginger read it.

It was a longer letter than the other. One thing was Sam called 'imself a silly fool two or three times over 'cos he 'ad gambled away the five pounds. He wanted Ginger to send 'im the other three, and said as 'ow he had 'ad awful bad luck, and never wanted to see a card agin as long as 'e lived. He told Ginger to give the other three pounds to 'is friend Sid, wot took the five pounds, and said if they followed 'im again he would never forgive 'im.

"Fair old cough-drop, ain't he?" ses the young feller.

"He's fell into bad 'ands," ses Ginger, glaring at him.

"That's right," ses Sid, "and we've got to get 'im out. You find the ready, and I'll do the rest."

Ginger read the letter agin, arter Peter 'ad done with it, and then 'e told the chap to wait while he went indoors for the money. Wot 'e really went indoors for was to tell the landlady's gal, a smart little kid of eleven, as 'ad two bilious attacks a week reg'lar to stay at 'ome and 'elp 'er mother, to foller Mr. Sid 'ome.

"Here's the three quid," 'e ses, coming out. "Take it and go."

"And let's 'ope he won't lose that," ses Sid. "Are you coming to see me as far as the—I mean, as far as you can?"

"I am not," ses Ginger.

"Ah, well, I don't blame you," ses Sid. "It's a waste of your time and mine too, ain't it? The last chap that tried to foller me 'ome seemed to think I lived in the canal. I never see a chap make 'imself so wet."

He gave Peter a playful little tap in the stummick, and, arter asking Ginger for a lock of his 'air to frighten the gals with, went off whistling. And he had 'ardly turned the corner afore the little gal was arter 'im.

By the time Peter and Ginger was back from their brekfuss she was home agin, 'aving follered the young man to his 'ouse, and seen 'im go inside. He didn't seem to 'ave any idea that 'e was being follered; and Ginger was so pleased with 'imself and 'is cleverness that Peter 'ad to remind 'im of all sorts of things he didn't want to be reminded of.

They waited in for some time to see if Sam came 'ome, but there was no sign of 'im, and Ginger began to wonder whether he 'ad lost the three quid as well as the five.

"We'll give 'im till eight o'clock," he ses. "And if he ain't 'ome by then we'll go round and fetch 'im."

"It's my belief they won't let 'im go," ses Peter.

"Or p'r'aps he's lost 'is trowsis agin," ses Ginger. "We'll take his other pair with us in case. And we'll get one or two to come with us to see fair play."

They picked up a couple o' firemen they knew, that arternoon. Stiff-built chaps they was, and always ready for a bit of trouble, 'aving both 'ad Irish mothers. They 'ad a few drinks to steady themselves, and then one of 'em, Bob Mills by name, got so upset because Ginger said he thought it 'ud be better not to burn the 'ouse down, that it took three men and the landlord to get 'im outside.

They went 'ome fust to see whether Sam 'ad turned up, and then, arter waking Bob, who 'ad gorn to sleep in Peter's bed, they set off to find 'im. It was a tall, dirty house, just off the 'Ighway, and Ginger began to think that if they got Sam out in one piece they'd be lucky. The front-door was open and a lot o' dirty-looking kids was playing on the steps.

"It's like a bee-hive," ses Peter. "He'll take some finding."

"I'll find 'im," ses Bob, spitting on his hands. "Come along."

He led them up the steps and opened the fust door 'e come to as bold as brass, and popped his 'ead in.

"Where's old Sam?" he ses, to a woman wot left off washing 'er baby to stare at 'im. "Wot 'ave you done with 'im?"

"*Wot?*" ses the woman.

"We want Mr. Sam Small," ses Ginger, putting his 'ead over Bob's shoulders.

"Wot 'ave you done with 'im?" ses Bob, agin.

"Me?" ses the woman. "Wot are you talking about? 'Ow dare you come shoving your ugly mug into a lady's room and try and take away 'er character? Wot d'ye mean by it?"

She put the baby down on the floor very careful and took up the basin o' water. It was a small basin, but the water showed that the baby 'adn't been washed afore it wanted it, and Bob Mills was out 'o that room afore you could say "knife."

"He ain't there," he ses, as the door banged be'ind 'im. "It's a funny thing a woman can never answer a civil question without losing 'er temper. If I 'adn't kept my eye on 'er I should have 'ad that water over me."

"They don't use their reason," ses Ginger, shaking his 'ead, and stopping at the next door to let 'im go in fust.

There was nobody in that room except a little gal of ten putting 'er little brothers to bed, and the way she carried on when Bob looked in would ha' done credit to a woman of seventy. He came out gasping for breath.

"I'll find 'im though," he ses to Ginger. "I'll find 'im if I 'ave to take all the boards up. Now wot about trying upstairs?"

There was two families in the fust room they went in, and they was both worse than each other. People came out of their rooms to listen and the way they carried on when Ginger and 'is pals paid *them* a visit won't bear repeating. By the time they 'ad got to the second floor the whole 'ouse was roused and standing behind and offering to fight 'em.

Bob and 'is pal went into the fust room on that floor alone, 'cos Ginger and Peter 'ad to

stay outside on the landing to keep the crowd back. 'Ard work it was, too; one young woman trying to bore holes in Peter with a broom-'andle, while a dirty hand with a wedding-ring on it kept coming out of the crowd and pinching pore Ginger black and blue.

In the middle of it there was a hullabaloo in that room that made 'em all leave off to listen. Deafening it was. People shouting and struggling and things toppling about all over the place. Then Bob and 'is mate came out carrying something that looked like a mad lion wrapped up in a blanket.

"He was in bed, asleep," ses Bob, panting, as a couple o' naked legs shot out and kicked anything they could find. "Pull your end o' the blanket down, Joe."

"Wot's he done?" ses a woman, gaping at them.

"Wot 'ave you done, you mean," ses Bob, struggling. "He's been kidnapped."

"And robbed," ses Ginger, shouting with pain, as 'e got another pinch.

"It's all right, Sam, old man," ses Peter, pulling back the blanket to give 'im a little air. "Now—Lor' lumme *this ain't Sam!*"

They all started, and Bob was so surprised that he let go of 'is end. It was the 'ead end, and the langwidge the old man it belonged to used was awful. Then 'e got up very slow, and, arter feeling his 'ead and using some more langwidge about a bump 'e found there, knocked Bob down.

In two twos they was all at it; the men fighting and the women screaming. Men Ginger hadn't seen afore seemed to turn up from nowhere to punch 'im. The four of 'em kept together as well as they could, and even when Ginger got to the bottom of the stairs 'e found the other three on top of 'im. They got outside at last, helped be'ind by the people in the 'ouse, and didn't stop for breath till they was two streets away. Bob Mills found 'is fust, and pretty near got run in for it.

"I ought to take you by rights," ses the policeman. "Wot 'ave you been doing to your face? Treading on it?"

Bob was going to answer 'im, but Ginger got his 'and over 'is mouth just in time.

"It's all right, sir," he ses, very perlite, "he's on'y a little bit excited. Come on, Bob."

They managed to get 'im round the corner, and then 'e shook 'em off and said he never wanted to see 'em again. He went off with 'is mate, and Peter and Ginger, arter being refused at three pubs because of their looks, sent a young feller in for a bottle o' whisky to take 'ome with them.

They 'ad a drop or two when they got indoors, and then they got a bit o' rag and some cold water and began to see wot they could do for their faces

"And this is all through Sam," ses Ginger, starting to grind 'is teeth and then finding they was too loose to grind.

"It's a mystery," ses Peter, who was sitting on Sam's bed 'olding a wet rag to his eye. "I believe you was right, Ginger. Something seems to tell me we shall never see 'im agin."

"'WHERE'S OLD SAM?' HE SES, TO A WOMAN WOT LEFT OFF WASHING 'ER BABY TO STARE AT 'IM. 'WOT 'AVE YOU DONE WITH 'IM?'"

"BOB WAS SO SURPRISED THAT HE LET GO OF 'IS END. IT WAS THE 'EAD END, AND THE LANGWIDGE THE OLD MAN IT BELONGED TO USED WAS AWFUL."

Ginger said he didn't want to. His mouth was so sore 'e couldn't smoke, and arter another drop or two of whisky, 'e said 'e was going to bed.

He undressed 'imself very slow, grunting and groaning all the time, and was just getting into bed when Peter 'eld up his 'and.

"Somebody coming upstairs," he ses.

"Let 'em come," ses Ginger, very grumpy.

"It—it can't be Sam!" ses Peter.

"Sounds like 'im," ses Ginger, staring. "It is 'im," he ses, as they both 'eard a noise that Sam used to make when 'e thought 'e was singing.

They stood staring at the door as it opened and Sam came into the room, looking very bright and pleased with 'imself.

"'Ullo, mates!" he ses. "Why—wot the—Wot 'ave you been doing to yourselves?"

He shook his 'ead, and screwed up 'is lips at 'em.

"It's a funny thing I can't go away for a day or two without you getting into trouble," he ses. "'Tain't respectable."

"Ho!" ses Ginger, finding 'is voice. "Ho, indeed. This is all the thanks we get for trying to 'elp you, is it? I s'pose you think it's more respectable to lose your trowsis at cards and play in your shirt."

"And a tater-sack," ses Peter.

"Trowsis!" ses Sam, staring at 'em, "tater-sack? 'Ave you been drinking? or wot?"

Ginger looked at Peter and then 'e looked very 'ard at Sam.

"Where—'ave—you—been?" he ses, very slow and distinct.

"Been staying with a chap at Stratford," ses Sam, 'elping 'imself to a drink. "My friend Sid told me as he'd 'eard the police was arter me for gambling, so I've been staying with a pal of 'is for a few days to let it blow over."

"And—and didn't you write to us?" ses Ginger, as soon as he could speak.

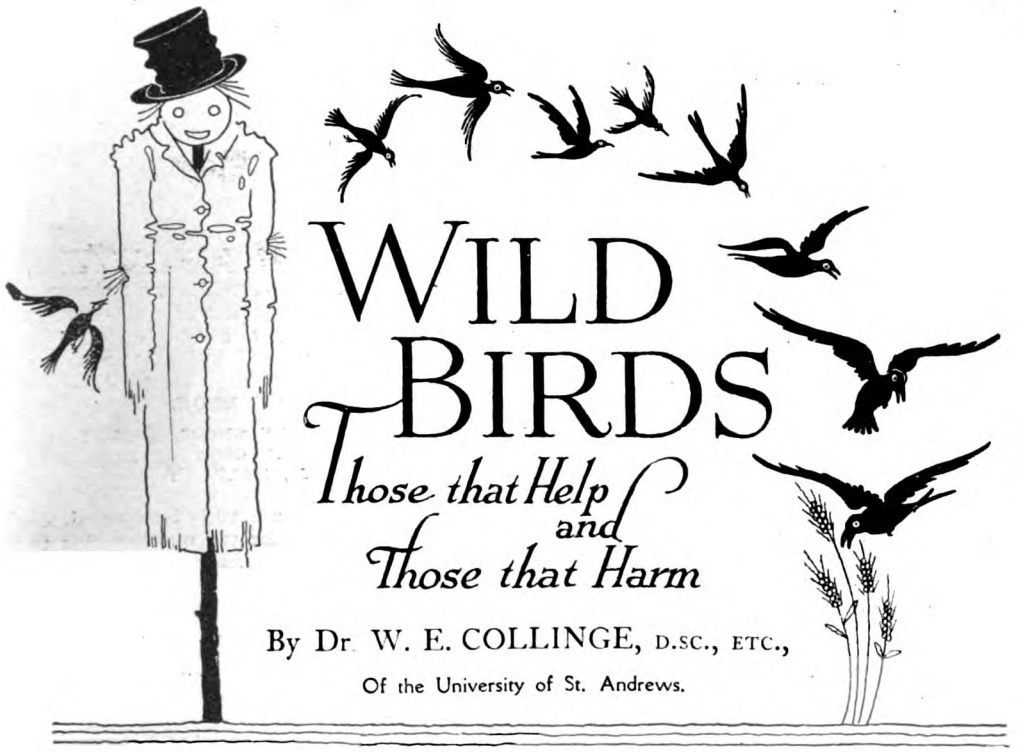
"Why, wot should I want to write to you for?" ses Sam, putting down 'is glass,

"Money," ses Ginger, looking 'im straight in the eye.

Sam shook his 'ead, "I 'ad enough on me," he ses, "but it was just as well I left that eight quid with you, Ginger. It might 'ave gorn if I 'adn't. Wot was it you was saying about trowsis and tater-sacks, Peter?"

"It's a joke of your friend, Sid's," says Ginger. "Ask him to tell it to you; you seem to tell 'im everything."

Him and Peter woke up at five o'clock next morning to go and look for fresh lodgings. Sam didn't wake up till eight, and then, arter reading a couple o' letters 'e found tucked under 'is chin, he went off without any brekfuss to look for Ginger and Peter, and Sid, and eight quid.



WILD BIRDS

Those that Help and Those that Harm

By Dr. W. E. COLLINGE, D.SC., ETC.,

Of the University of St. Andrews.

ILLUSTRATED BY WARWICK REYNOLDS.

An article not only of the greatest practical interest, but of the utmost value to all who have to do with farm or garden.

THE PROBLEM STATED.

THE problem of wild bird preservation and destruction is no new one, but it has during the past quarter of a century forced itself upon the consideration of practically all civilized countries. At the outset let us state that in reviewing this difficult subject we have endeavoured to place on one side all sentimental and æsthetic considerations, and to view the matter purely from an economic aspect, based almost entirely upon careful investigations extending over many years. Hearsay, rumour, and the opinion of bird-lovers must of necessity be disregarded if we are to arrive at any just and exact conclusions.

Briefly, the problem may be stated as follows. We have, roughly speaking, about three hundred and eighty species of wild birds in the British Isles, a large percentage of which are so rare or so small in numbers that they may here be left out of consideration. The truly insectivorous species and most of the aquatic and littoral-habiting species affect the question only in so far as their preservation is highly important, so that the list of so-called injurious species is reduced to what we might term the commonest species and a few gulls.

For a moment let us consider the nature of the injuries and the losses entailed.

It will be generally agreed that any attempt to state the loss occasioned by wild birds can only be approximately correct. Quite recently, in the controversy regarding the injuries inflicted by the house-sparrow, a writer states: "Ignoring the waste of grain in the field, the harm done to grain that is sprouting or milting, and the robberies from shed and threshing-floor, quays and stables, etc., and assuming that each acre is ravaged for eight or ten days of a peck a day valued at two shillings, we have to face a possible loss of bread-stuffs alone to the tune of one pound per acre. As we should have approximately eight million acres under grain this year, 1917, the possible cost of allowing sparrows to multiply reaches the incredible figure of eight million pounds."

The losses borne by fruit-growers due to the ravages of blackbirds, starlings, bullfinches, etc., are well known, and what they total financially must reach a figure equally astonishing.

Anyone who has followed the letters in the

Times and other papers during the past nine or ten years will be acquainted with the farmers' opinion of the rook and the wood-pigeon, and can vaguely estimate the enormous loss of food products these birds destroy. Personally, we have estimated the annual financial losses due to injurious birds and the destruction of beneficial ones at a sum equalling at least forty million pounds.

Almost naturally, a number of questions arise in the mind of the thoughtful reader. "How are we to know which species are injurious and which beneficial?"

THE ROOK,

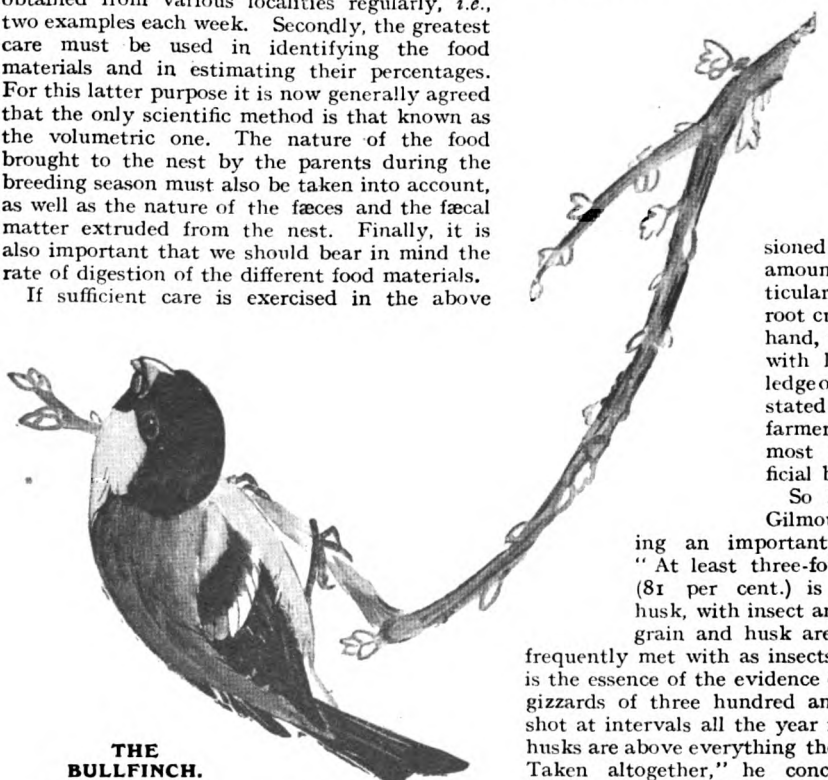
"WHICH ANNUALLY CONSUMES AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF CEREALS WHICH FAR OUTWEIGH THE GOOD IT DOES BY DESTROYING INSECTS, ETC."

Experience has shown that by the employment of the following method a very accurate knowledge may be obtained of a bird's feeding habits and the nature of its food.

Firstly, it is necessary that the collection of information should extend over the whole of the twelve months of the year, and, if possible, for successive years. The material should be obtained from various localities regularly, *i.e.*, two examples each week. Secondly, the greatest care must be used in identifying the food materials and in estimating their percentages. For this latter purpose it is now generally agreed that the only scientific method is that known as the volumetric one. The nature of the food brought to the nest by the parents during the breeding season must also be taken into account, as well as the nature of the fæces and the fæcal matter extruded from the nest. Finally, it is also important that we should bear in mind the rate of digestion of the different food materials.

If sufficient care is exercised in the above work and the results are fairly interpreted, then it is possible to answer the question, "Is this or that species of bird beneficial, injurious, or neutral?"

The Evidence.—Although the number of species that have been subjected to the above method of investigation are comparatively few, they at once vindicate its value. Let us take the case of the rook.



THE BULLFINCH.

"WHEN NUMEROUS IN A FRUIT-GROWING DISTRICT, FOR SELF-PROTECTION THEY MUST BE KILLED, AS THE DAMAGE THEY DO TO THE BUDS IS A VERY SERIOUS MATTER."

THE ROOK.

For many years past the farmer has pointed out that this bird was so plentiful that it annually occasioned an enormous amount of damage, particularly to cereal and root crops; on the other hand, the general public, with little or no knowledge of its feeding habits, stated that it was "the farmers' friend," and a most useful and beneficial bird.

So long ago as 1896 Gilmour, after conducting an important inquiry, wrote: "At least three-fourths of rook-food (81 per cent.) is cereal grain and husk, with insect and grub; also that grain and husk are at least twice as frequently met with as insects and grubs. This is the essence of the evidence extracted from the gizzards of three hundred and thirty-six rooks shot at intervals all the year round. Grain and husks are above everything the food of the rook. Taken altogether," he concludes, "the rook has almost no claim to agricultural regard." Thring examined one hundred and forty-one specimens killed on one estate at intervals of a few days throughout one whole year (1908), and

THE BLUE TIT.

"THERE ARE FEW BIRDS SO BENEFICIAL TO MANKIND AS THE TITS, AND YET THEY ARE DESTROYED BY GARDENERS AND FRUIT-GROWERS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY."

showed that a very considerable amount of grain was destroyed.

In 1908–9 the writer examined six hundred and thirty-one specimens, and a further series later, so that we can now state in exact terms the precise position that this bird occupies. Of the total annual consumption of food 41 per cent. is animal matter and 59 per cent. vegetable matter. The former is composed of 23·9 per cent. of injurious insects, 3·5 per cent. of beneficial insects, 4·6 per cent. of neutral insects, 3·2 per cent. of slugs and snails, 4·4 per cent. of earthworms, and 1·4 per cent. of eggs, mice, etc. The vegetable matter is composed of 35·1 per cent. of cereals, 13·4 per cent. of potatoes and roots, 4·4 per cent. of weed seed, and 6·1 per cent. of miscellaneous vegetable matter of a neutral nature. It will thus be seen that the injuries total 52 per cent., the benefits 28·5 per cent., and 19·5 per cent. of the food is of a neutral nature.

Later examinations by other workers only serve to corroborate the above results. It seems clear, therefore, as the result of the above inquiries, that the rook prefers a grain diet, and that it annually consumes an enormous amount of cereals which far outweigh the good it does by destroying insects, insect larvæ, etc. We have too many rooks, and, in consequence, they have changed their feeding habits.

THE STARLING.

The starling is another bird about which there is a very divided opinion, and yet nearly everyone who has investigated its feeding habits has condemned it. Twenty-one years ago Gilmour regarded it "as a friend of the farmer," but during the intervening period there has been an enormous increase of these birds in the British Isles, partly due to immigration and partly to protection, so that at the present time they constitute a veritable plague.

An analysis of the total food consumed in a year by three hundred and sixty-eight starlings shows that 51 per cent. consists of animal matter and 49 per cent. of vegetable matter. Of the former 26·5 per cent. is composed of injurious insects, 3·5 per cent. of neutral insects, 2·5 per cent. of beneficial insects, 8·5 per cent. of earthworms, 6·5 per cent. of slugs, 1·5 per cent. of millipedes, and 2 per cent. of miscellaneous animal matter of a beneficial nature. Cereals constitute 20·5 per cent. of the vegetable matter,

THE THRUSH.

"BOTH THE MISSEL AND SONG THRUSH DO CONSIDERABLY MORE GOOD THAN HARM."

THE KESTREL.

"FEW WILD BIRDS HAVE BEEN SUBJECTED TO GREATER PERSECUTION THAN THE KESTREL, AND YET ITS VALUE TO THE FARMER CAN SCARCELY BE OVER-ESTIMATED. IF OUR FARMS ——

whilst 15 per cent. consists of cultivated fruits, 2·5 per cent. of roots and leaves, 7·5 per cent. of wild fruits and weed seeds, and 3·5 per cent. of miscellaneous vegetable matter of a neutral nature. Summarizing these figures it is seen that of the total amount of food consumed 36·5 per cent. is beneficial, 41 per cent. injurious, and 22·5 per cent. neutral.

THE CHAFFINCH.

This beautiful and interesting bird has been accused of damaging seed corn, etc., and of recent years its numbers have been considerably reduced in many districts. An examination of the stomach contents of one hundred and twenty-eight adults shows that only 25 per cent. of the total food consumed in a year consists of animal matter, the remaining 75 per cent. being vegetable food. Injurious insects constitute 16·5 per cent. of the former, beneficial insects 1·5 per cent., neutral insects 4·5 per cent., spiders 1 per cent., and earthworms 1·5 per cent. Of the vegetable food 56 per cent. consists of weed seeds, 4·5 per cent. of blossom buds, 3·5 per cent. of fruit pulp, 8·5 per cent. of cereals, and 2·5 per cent. of miscellaneous vegetable matter of a neutral nature. In other words 65·5 per cent. of this bird's food is of a neutral nature, 16·5 per cent. beneficial, and 18 per cent. injurious.

No protection, at present, is needed for the chaffinch, but a careful consideration of the food items shows that its destruction would be a loss, for its destruction of injurious insects more than compensates for the injuries it inflicts.

THE BULLFINCH.

In nearly every fruit-growing district in the country there is an annual outcry against the bullfinch. The harm it does is most serious, but its handsome appearance has gained for it many friends. Thus, one describes it as "a perfectly harmless and altogether desirable neighbour, as it feeds on hedge fruits, seeds of dock, thistle, and other weeds, except in February and March, when it does serious damage, if not watched, to the gooseberry, plum, and damson buds. It is never necessary, however, to shoot it.'

How entirely different is the opinion of one who has carefully studied this bird's feeding habits! Mr. Cecil H. Hooper writes: "It has been briefly described as not having one redeeming feature save his appearance. . . . When numerous in a fruit-growing district, it seems that for self-protection they must be killed, as the damage they do to the buds is a very serious matter."

An investigation made by the writer during 1907–11, in which four hundred and eighty-four post-mortem examinations were made, clearly reveals the true character of this bird. During the whole of this inquiry only a single stomach was found to contain fragments of an insect. Of the total bulk of food consumed 41 per cent. consisted of fruit buds and fruitlets, 15 per cent. of wild fruits, amongst which the blackberry is included, and 44 per cent. of weed seeds.

That the bullfinch helps in the distribution of such obnoxious weeds as charlock, dock, groundsel, and sow-thistle, we have proved by actual experimentation with the droppings.

If we rightly interpret the above figures the bullfinch stands condemned, but in addition to this it is well known to wantonly destroy as many fruit buds as are actually eaten, or even a larger number. Handsome as this bird undoubtedly is, it is an enemy of the fruit-grower and should therefore not be protected.

THE SKYLARK.

This beautiful songster has been destroyed in great numbers on account of its supposed injury to wheat and small seeds, but an examination of the stomach contents of sixty-nine specimens shows that the benefits it confers are out of all proportion to the injuries. Its food consists of 46 per cent. of animal matter and 54 per cent. of vegetable matter. Of the former 35·5 per cent. is composed of injurious insects, 3·4 per cent. of neutral insects, 2·5 per cent. of beneficial insects, 2 per cent. of earthworms, 1 per cent. of slugs, and 1·5 per cent. of

—— HAVE TO BE KEPT CLEAR OF MICE AND VOLES, THE KESTREL MUST BE ALLOWED TO THRIVE AND FLOURISH."

miscellaneous animal matter. Of the vegetable food 43·5 per cent. consists of the seeds of weeds, 9·5 per cent. of grain, and 1 per cent. of the leaves of crops. Summarizing these figures we find that 36·5 per cent. of the total bulk of food consumed is beneficial, only 13 per cent. injurious, and 50·5 per cent. of a neutral nature. This analysis at once disposes of the charge that the skylark is injurious; on the other hand, it shows that it is a most beneficial bird, and one that the farmer should demand most stringent protection for. The migratory birds that arrive in the autumn, when found in large numbers and doing harm, should of course be checked.

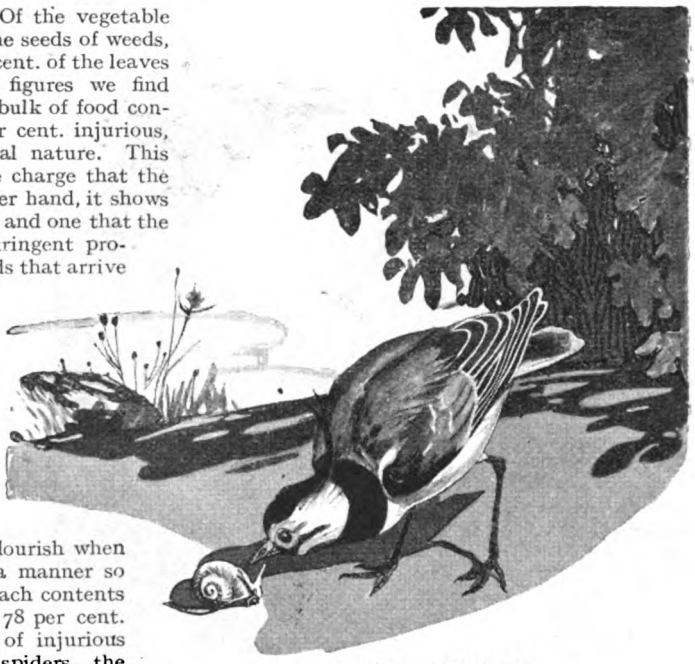
THE BLUE TIT.

There are few birds so beneficial to mankind as the tits, and yet they are destroyed by gardeners and fruit-growers throughout the country. No wonder that injurious insects flourish when man, in his ignorance, acts in a manner so stupid. An analysis of the stomach contents reveals the startling fact that 78 per cent. of the blue tit's food consists of injurious insects and 1 per cent. of spiders, the balance consisting of 8·5 per cent. of wild fruits and the seeds of weeds, 2·5 per cent. of grass and miscellaneous vegetable matter, 6 per cent. of fruit pulp, 2 per cent. of blossom buds, and 2 per cent. of wheat. Only 10 per cent. of its food is injurious and 12 per cent. neutral. The great tit is equally beneficial, and both species should be most stringently protected—both the birds and their eggs.

THE THRUSHES.

The economic status of the thrushes has long been a vexed question. That they destroy a certain amount of fruit every grower is aware, but what has not until quite recently been known is the ratio this amount of fruit holds to the other food items. We are now in possession of this knowledge, which shows that both species do considerably more good than harm. We may group the food items of the two species together :—

	Missel Thrush.	Song Thrush.	Totals.
Injurious Insects .	30·5	32·0	Beneficial
Slugs and Snails .	3·5	5·0	35·5 &
Miscellaneous ..	1·5	—	37·0
Cultivated Fruits	16·5	15·0	Injurious
Beneficial Insects	4·5	2·0	21.0
Wild Fruits and Seeds	24·0	26·5	& 17·0
Miscellaneous Vegetable Matter ..	4·5	1.5	Neutral
Neutral Insects ..	1·0	1·5	43·5
Earthworms ..	14·0	15·0	&
Miscellaneous Animal Matter..	—	1·5	46·0



THE LAPWING.

"THERE IS A UNANIMOUS OPINION AS TO ITS GREAT VALUE, AND YET IT IS STILL UNPROTECTED IN SOME PARTS OF THE COUNTRY AND IS UNDOUBTEDLY DECREASING."

It is obvious that both of these species confer far more benefits than injuries, and that the fruit-grower must suffer by their destruction.

THE SPARROW.

Little need be said with reference to the house-sparrow. At the present time it is so abundant as to be one of the most serious enemies of the farmer; moreover, as has frequently been pointed out, in many districts it has driven away the house-martin, an insectivorous species and an extremely valuable one. In agricultural districts 75 per cent. of the sparrow's food consists of grain, 10 per cent. of weed seeds, 5 per cent. of injurious insects, and 10 per cent. of neutral matter. In fruit-growing districts only 7 per cent. consists of grain, 9 per cent. of blossom buds, 60 per cent. of injurious insects, 10 per cent. of weed seeds, 10 per cent. of neutral matter, and 4 per cent. of miscellaneous food. The real trouble with the sparrow is that we have allowed it to increase to such an extent that throughout the land it has become a plague.

THE KESTREL.

Few wild birds have been subjected to greater persecution than the kestrel, and yet its value to the farmer can scarcely be over-estimated. Animal matter constitutes 99 per cent. of its food, of which 64·5 per cent. consists of mice and voles, 16·5 per cent. of injurious insects, 8·5 per cent. of sparrows,

THE BARN OWL.

"THAT THIS BIRD AND ITS EGGS ARE NOT MOST STRICTLY PROTECTED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR IS A STRIKING COMMENTARY ON OUR PRESENT POLICY AS REGARDS WILD BIRDS."

blackbirds, etc., 6 per cent. of nestling birds, 2·5 per cent. of earthworms, and 1 per cent. of frogs. With such a record it is surely not necessary to plead for the protection of this bird. If our farms have to be kept clear of mice and voles, the kestrel must be allowed to thrive and flourish.

THE LAPWING.

The value of this bird to the farmer has been extolled by practically every writer who has described its habits. There is a unanimous opinion as to its great value, and yet it is still unprotected in some parts of the country and is undoubtedly decreasing. Almost the whole of its food consists of injurious insects, viz., 60 per cent., 10 per cent. of slugs and snails, 10 per cent. of earthworms, 6 per cent. of weed seeds, 4 per cent. of neutral insects, and 5 per cent. each of miscellaneous animal and vegetable matter. In other words, 70 per cent. of its food is directly beneficial to the farmer, and the remaining 30 per cent. is of a neutral nature.

THE BARN OWL.

That this bird and its eggs are not most strictly protected throughout the year is a striking commentary on our present policy as regards wild birds. The whole of its food consists of animal matter, of which 7·5 per cent. consists of injurious insects, 68·5 per cent. of mice and voles, 9·5 per cent. of house-sparrows, starlings, and blackbirds, 9 per cent. of shrew-mice, 4·5 per cent. of small birds, and 1 per cent. of neutral insects. Thus 85·5 per cent. of the food is beneficial, 13·5 per cent. injurious, and 1 per cent. neutral.

The Need for Action.—After what has been said, one must be blind to facts or wilfully capable of misinterpreting them to doubt the necessity for some immediate and drastic action.

No one who has studied this important and extremely difficult subject wishes for a moment to offer undue protection to birds as a class; on the other hand, there are few species so injurious that we are justified in urging their complete extermination. Such a policy economically is unsound, but where they become too numerous, at times it becomes necessary to destroy them, and where, through various causes, their numbers become unduly reduced or where the species is wholly beneficial, it is equally necessary and important to protect them; and this is the principle which should underlie all sound legislation upon the subject.

RESULT OF THE SENSE OF HUMOUR COMPETITION.

THE order of popularity of the twelve comic pictures, as shown by the voting, is as follows:—

First - Picture No.	**2**	**Fourth - Picture No.**	**12**	**Seventh - Picture No.**	**4**	**Tenth - Picture No.**	**8**
Second ,,	**11**	**Fifth ,,**	**7**	**Eighth ,,**	**3**	**Eleventh ,,**	**5**
Third ,,	**10**	**Sixth ,,**	**9**	**Ninth ,,**	**1**	**Twelfth ,,**	**6**

No competitor succeeded in placing all the pictures in this order and the best list contained two mistakes. This was sent in by

M. ROSS, 57, Raven Road, London, E., to whom is awarded the FIRST PRIZE of £100.

THE Second Prize of £25 is won by CORPORAL S. W. LARNER, 61945, Depot Bedford Regiment, No. 2 Company, Kempston Barracks, near Bedford, Beds, with a list containing four mistakes; while two competitors win a Prize of £5 each for lists with five mistakes. Their names and addresses are: PTE. J. BUCHANAN, 550676, C.A.P.C., P.M. Branch, 7, Millbank, London, S.W.1; H. HARDING, Ryecroft, Clutton, Bristol.

Lists with six mistakes were sent in by fifteen competitors, and these win a Prize of £1 each. Their names and addresses are: MRS. FRANK GENGE, 14, St. Paul's Road, Bradford, Yorkshire; CAPT. F. BOYD HOTCHEN, No. 1 Port Construction Co., R.E., A.P.O S. 87, British Forces in France; PTE. B. G. BRUNSON, 20724, E Co., Room 28, R.M. Barracks, Forton, Gosport; J. DOUGLAS T. PARSONS, Grasmere, East Hoathly, Sussex; MISS DOROTHY JORDAN, Oakdene, Kendal, Westmorland; MRS. H. G. WILLIAMS, 26, Alma Street, Eccles, Manchester; MISS E. TAYLOR, 23, Warrington Crescent, Maida Hill, London, W.9.; MISS DOROTHY BROOK, Rosefield, Birkby Hall Road, Huddersfield; H. W. EMERTON, 8, Cumby Terrace, Pembroke Dock, S Wales; MRS SHAW, 27, Alma Road, Clifton, Bristol; HAROLD BIRKWOOD, 84, Clumber Street, Hull; ROBERT E. BUNTING, Western House, Swaffham, Norfolk; MISS MARJORIE TALBOT, 1, Nelson Road. Wanstead, London, E.11; MRS. J. C. MACKIE, 24, Dry Clough Lane, Salterhebble, Halifax, Yorks; WILLIE O. MCBRYDE, 62, Oakfield Road, West Croydon, Surrey.

The SAUCE HABIT

by William Caine and H.M.Bateman

PERPETUALLY within the heart of man two mighty antagonists do battle together. I refer to the Spiritual and the Material. We writers are here to record the incidents of this war. Like other experts, we emphasize the victories of the side which we represent. If we are worthy craftsmen we acclaim the successes of the Spiritual; this is popular, and brings us much money. If we are decadent scoundrels, we gloat upon every advantage which the Material obtains over its adversary. The great, sound-hearted public, in consequence, hates us, and we live in squalor and penury (as is most just), the prey of alcoholism, drugs, and fleas. This is well known, and it is most encouraging to all good people.

Since I desire to be very rich, I have long identified myself as completely as possible with those forces which are sworn to bring about the ruin of the Material principle. My pen is wholly dedicated to this object, and whenever it moves upon paper you may be sure that the *dénouement* will be a happy and, consequently, a moral one. It is perfectly unnecessary for you to look at the end before you begin at the beginning. You are quite safe. All will be well. Virtue shall triumph. If it didn't, do you suppose I would be drawing attention to the circumstance?

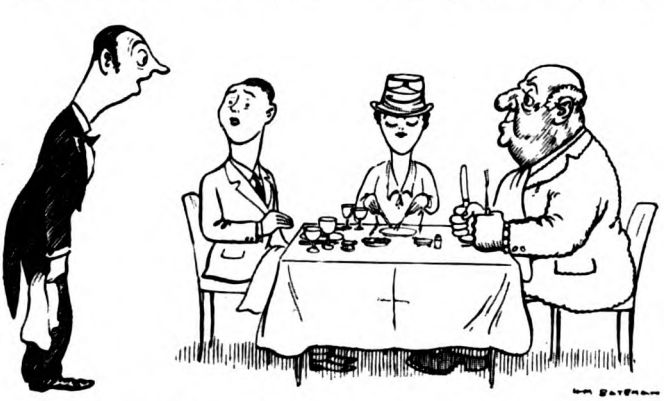
Now, then.

Arbuthnot Wriothesley loved good food. He loved it, I say. And by good food I don't mean roast beef, and apple tart, and Cheshire cheese, and things of that kind. I mean *poulet au grain Bernhardt, homard Caruso, tournedos Pavlova* and *fraises Harry Lauder*, and things of that kind. Arbuthnot was, in a word, a gourmet. Brillat Savarin's "Psychologie du Goût" was his bedbook. I need say no more.

Fortunately, he had a considerable income. This circumstance enabled him to frequent all the best restaurants, which he did. *Maîtres d'hôtel* and head waiters dropped everything and came running between the tables to meet Arbuthnot at the door. He never had to reserve a table anywhere. For him there was never any of that degrading business with the waiter and the bill. He paid monthly, by cheque, like a gentleman.

Cupid, that tiresome child, marked this Arbuthnot, so happy and so greedy, shot an arrow into him, and went his way sniggering. Three weeks later Arbuthnot proposed and was accepted. *His* business was done.

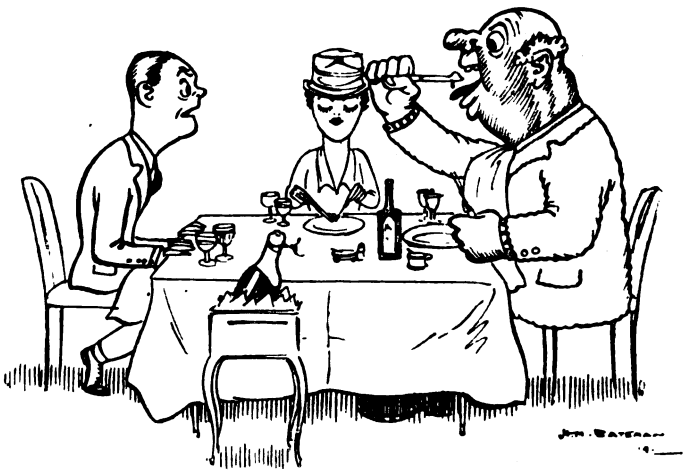
The lady's name was Dulcie. Like Arbuthnot,



"THE WAITER DID NOT UNDERSTAND. HE STOOD, LOOKING FOOLISH, AND DID NOTHING."

she was comfortably off; rather more so, indeed, than Arbuthnot. It was therefore what is called an ideal match, even though Dulcie's family was not an old one.

Better off still was Dulcie's Uncle William. He was horribly well off. A self-made man, a citizen of Manchester or Leeds, or somewhere, an honest, kindly vulgarian, eighteen stone, four chins, a laugh like an anti-aircraft gun—that was Uncle William. He had hundreds of thousands of pounds. Dulcie adored him and made no secret of it. Why should she? He was her uncle, wasn't he? And some day he would—must—die. Arbuthnot, who knew not Uncle William, vowed that he, too, would adore the old man, and that the old man should adore him. He swore it.



"THEN WITH THE POINT OF HIS KNIFE—YOU GUESS WHAT HE DID WITH THE POINT OF HIS KNIFE."

Uncle William wrote to Dulcie to say how pleased he was that she had got a young man, and informed her that he would be in London shortly, on such a day, for a week, and hoped to meet the lad. Arbuthnot wrote accordingly to Uncle William, and invited him to lunch at the Café Ecstatic, on such another day, with Dulcie and himself. Uncle William accepted this invitation.

Arbuthnot, having vowed to win the love of Uncle William, devoted a great deal of time (which he could very well afford) to the preparation of his menu. The items will presently be disclosed. Just now it is enough if I say that, when his task was done, Arbuthnot had tears in his eyes as he read them over.

They were all punctual at their appointment at the Café Ecstatic. This is the chickest restaurant in Europe. Everybody knows that.

They took their places at table after Dulcie had introduced Arbuthnot to the adorable uncle. Uncle William wore clothes of orange Harris tweed and a scarlet necktie. Every person in the room except himself was aware of it. It did not even escape Arbuthnot's notice. But nothing could be done now. Nothing.

Angels on Horseback were laid in front of Arbuthnot and his guests. When Arbuthnot had explained them to Uncle William, Uncle William asked: "Wheer's t' sauce?"

Arbuthnot was interested.

"The sauce?" he repeated. "I never heard of any particular sauce being served with Angels on Horseback, Uncle William. What kind of a sauce do you mean?"

"Worcester," said Uncle William.

Arbuthnot's stomach moved under his waistcoat. He went very pale and beckoned to the waiter. "Worcester sauce," he whispered. The waiter did not understand. He simply did not understand. He stood, looking foolish, and did nothing. It was impossible for him to connect the two ideas of Angels on Horseback and Worcester sauce.

"Nah, then, my lad," said Uncle William, "look slippy. Didst never hear of Worcester sauce?"

Arbuthnot had beckoned to the head waiter. "This gentleman," he said, when the functionary arrived, "wants some Worcester sauce."

Nothing could astonish the head waiter. That was why he was the head waiter. He spoke with acerbity to his underling in the language of waiters, and the underling vanished as if he had been blown out. A moment later he reappeared, accompanied by the condiment. In the kitchens of restaurants like the Café Ecstatic, they use Worcester sauce sometimes in the preparation of devilled horse-radish and other piquant savouries of the kind.

Uncle William poured Worcester sauce all over his Angels on Horseback. Not until they were drowned did he desist. Then he ate them. He pronounced them to be champion. Arbuthnot achieved a smile on the wrong side of his mouth and said that *that* was all right.

A *Sole Marguéry* was displayed at Arbuthnot's elbow, was approved, and was carried to the serving table. It was served. Uncle William

grasped the bottle of Worcester sauce and inverted it over his plate. His portion of *Sole Marguéry* disappeared. He salvaged it, ate it, and pronounced it to be champion, especially the mussels. While this was going on Arbuthnot chattered like a madman about nothing whatever and held on to the edge of the table with both hands. It was impossible for him even to pretend to eat. Dulcie ate her sole quite happily. She would have been quite as happy if it had been hake. She would have been much happier if it had been cold tinned tongue. If it had been a Bath bun with plenty of sugar on it she would have been absolutely happy.

The next course was a *chateaubriand* with a Bearnaise sauce.

Bearnaise sauce is the *spécialité des spécialités* of the Café Ecstatic. Its secret is the possession of one man. He makes nothing else, and they pay him a thousand pounds a year. His sauce is famous in two hemispheres. If the gods of Greece had known the recipe they would never have put up with common ambrosia.

"What," inquired Uncle William, "is this stuff?" He pointed with his knife to the Bearnaise sauce on his plate. Arbuthnot told him what it was.

Uncle William scraped it all carefully to one side of his plate. "When A eat good meat," he said, "*A* like to ta-aste it." He seized the dreadful bottle, and his piece of the *chateaubriand* was drenched. He devoured the thing in three quick bites, while Arbuthnot prayed silently for strength to sustain this trial.

Then said Uncle William: "That's champion!"

Then he collected all the Bearnaise sauce into a little heap. In this, with the point of his knife, he made a little hole. Into this hole he poured Worcester sauce until all the Bearnaise sauce was covered with the overflow. Then with the point of his knife he kneaded and manipulated Bearnaise and Worcester until the twain were inextricably mingled. Then with the point of his knife—I cannot bear to write it. You guess what he did with the point of his knife. You guess truly.

Anyhow, he said it was champion.

Arbuthnot beckoned the waiter to his side. "Bring me," he said, softly, "a double cognac. Quick!" and he gripped the leg of the table with both knees as well as its edge with both hands, for the room was turning about him.

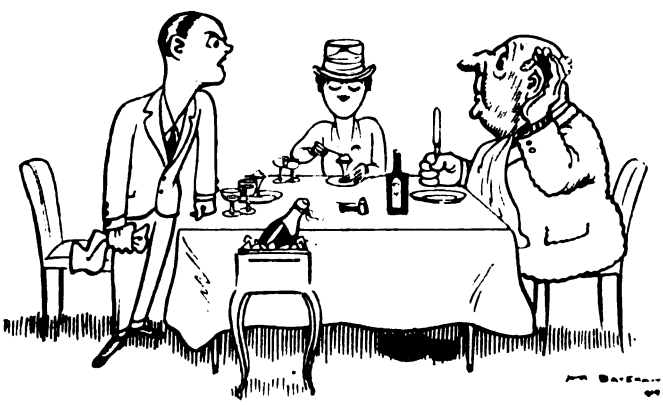
Then came rice-birds *en chemise*. Also the double cognac was handed to Arbuthnot. He drained the glass and, thus supported, watched Uncle William as he converted his rice-bird into Worcester sauce and bones. By this time Arbuthnot was incapable of being civil to Uncle William, but Dulcie prattled on busily. She was quite unaware that appalling events were taking place. She didn't give a hang for her rice-bird. If she thought about it at all, it was as a tedious postponement of the sweet.

The sweet appeared. It consisted of muscatel grapes, skinned and stoned, and embedded in tangerine ice-cream. It was called *Raisins Ecstatic*. Dulcie yelped for more. Uncle William would have none of it, and asked if he could have a Welsh rabbit. Arbuthnot had been so terrified of what Uncle William might do with the *raisins Ecstatic* that he was actually grateful to the old man, and gave the order in a firmer voice than he had been able to use for a quarter of an hour.

The man who makes Welsh rabbits for the Café Ecstatic only earns five hundred a year, but nevertheless he is a very great artist. One of his triumphs was placed in front of Uncle William, who immediately attempted to cover it with Worcester sauce. He failed, because the bottle was exhausted. Did that deter him? Not it. He called for another bottle.

At this, something, as they say, snapped in Arbuthnot's brain. He had, simply, borne too much. The breaking-point had been reached. The last straw had been added to his load of misery. The gallant struggle which he had conducted went, in a moment, all for nothing. There, with the goal at his finger-tips, he abandoned the race.

From a worldly and immoral point of view this is very sad; but from that which I represent, it is cause for the loudest jubilation. Let us



"'UNCLE WILLIAM,' HE CRIED, WITH SUDDEN VIOLENCE, 'YOU SHALL NOT HAVE ANY MORE WORCESTER SAUCE.'"

jubilate. In Arbuthnot's soul the Spiritual (when all seemed lost) suddenly asserted itself over the Material, and was the Master.

The last vestige of thought about the hundreds of thousands of pounds which Uncle William possessed departed from the mind of Arbuthnot. He only knew that he could not endure to see Bearnaise sauce and rice-birds, I cannot stand it. For the sake of hospitality, for the sake of your grey hairs, for the sake of my love for Dulcie, I have hitherto looked on and said nothing. I have done wrong. I repent. I refuse any longer to connive at your exorbitant villainies. That innocent Welsh rabbit shall at least be saved

"UNCLE WILLIAM THEN SPOKE. THE SCENE WAS A HIDEOUS ONE."

Uncle William open another bottle of Worcester sauce upon that Welsh rabbit. Enough sacrilege had been committed. Enough. The time had come when the sanctity of good food must be proclaimed, no matter what the cost.

Uncle William was inordinately rich. No matter. He was an old man and an ignorant. No matter. He was an invited guest. No matter. He was a warm-hearted, generous old thing. No matter.

Where good food was concerned he was the Devil, and as the Devil Arbuthnot could, at last, alone regard him.

He must be dealt with. He must. There was no help for it.

"Uncle William," he cried, with sudden violence, "you shall not have any more Worcester sauce. I forbid it. I loathe you, Uncle William. You are a wicked old man, Uncle William. You murder good food, Uncle William. I don't mind your poisoning yourself, but when it comes to poisoning soles, and fillet steak, and Waiter, you are not to bring this horrible old man any more Worcester sauce."

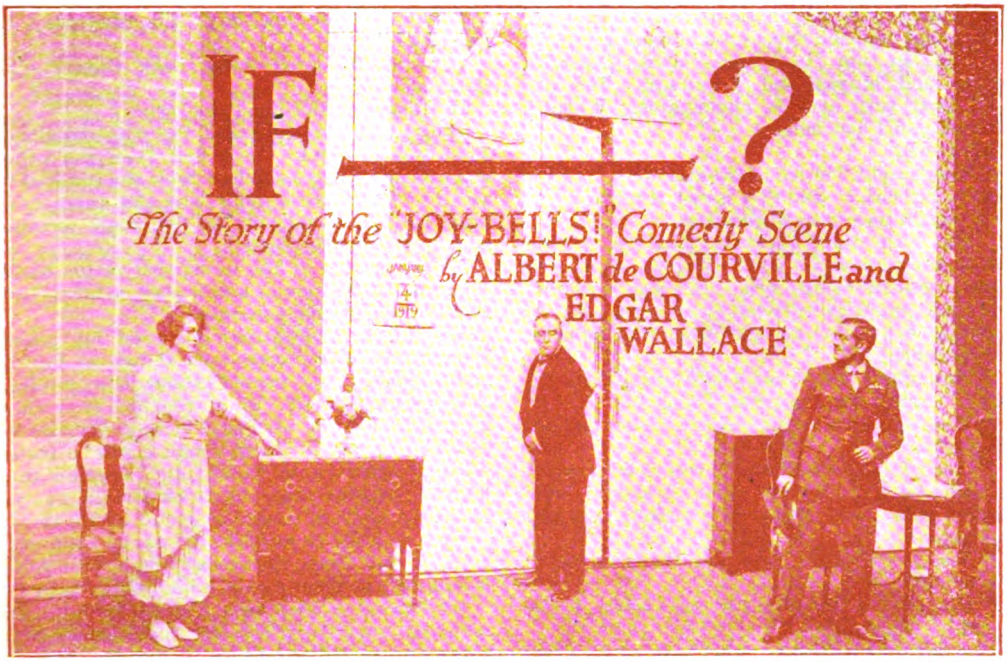
He ceased, leaned back in his chair, and, with a shaking hand, lit a cigarette.

Uncle William then spoke. The scene was a hideous one. At least two women fainted, and several chairs were broken under the weight of regular male clients of the restaurant, who had climbed upon them in order to see as much as possible. It was a terrible time for everybody, but at last it was over. Uncle William had stormed out of the room and back to Yorkshire, or wherever he came from. It was over. It was over. Right had triumphed.

Dulcie looked up from her third helping of *raisins Ecstatic*. "Where's Uncle William?" she asked.

Arbuthnot told her.

But it made no difference. She stuck to him. She liked him better than her Uncle William, and she and Arbuthnot had five thousand a year between them.



This is the story of the amusing little comedy in "Joy-Bells!" at the London Hippodrome, with photographs of the scene as played by George Robey and Shirley Kellogg. It is the first time that George Robey has appeared in a part in everyday costume and without make-up

THE war had soured Hector Smith. It had drawn a line between comparative youth and comparative middle-age. It had burst inconveniently, as wars have a habit of bursting, upon more than one half-matured scheme of his, and had scattered them to bits and left him the poorer. To be exact, it had left Mary the poorer, because it was Mary's money that went, of which fact it had become a habit of hers to remind him.

But more souring, bits of boys, the merest urchins, to be patronized or ignored in the old days, had obtruded themselves upon his and the public's attentions. The balance of life was over-set. The inconsiderable factors (in which category he included these boys who now strutted consciously be-ribboned through his world) had grown to such importance that they overshadowed the real big things of life, such as his handicap at golf, his bridge hands, the remarkable poverty of intelligence on the part of his partners, and the like.

There was a time when Arthur, for example, would have been carried to the seventh heaven by a timely half-sovereign, and would have run his long legs off in his haste to reach the confectioner's before the cream buns were sold. Now Arthur was a straight-limbed youth with "wings," and a record of good service in France. And Arthur and Mary——

Pshaw! It was absurd! Why, he remembered this dirty little kid when he was so high! Yet, it was a fact that Mary spent most of her time with Arthur, raved about his dancing, his beautiful manners; his perfect sympathy. Pshaw!

Hector Smith cursed the war that forced him to listen to gruesome stories in which he was not interested.

He opened the drawing-room door and stalked in, then stopped with a little grimace. The inevitable Arthur was there, and the inevitable Arthur with an embarrassed giggle made his escape with a mumbled reference to the weather.

As for Mary, she looked too good to be true.

"Hasn't that bird got a perch of his own?" snarled Hector.

"How can you speak of a man who has been wounded——?" began his indignant partner.

Mr. Smith laughed contemptuously.

"Wounded! The first time he tried to fly he crashed, and the second time he tried to fly he crashed, and the third time he tried to fly he crashed!"

She tossed her head.

"I'd like to see you do it!"

Mr. Smith shrugged.

"Oh, I know it's a mistake to talk disrespectfully of your hero," he sneered.

He was not feeling at his brightest.

"What do you mean?" she demanded, with ominous calm.

"I mean, I'm fed up, that's what I mean," he snapped, and she flamed round on him.

"And so am I!" she cried. "You're vulgar and stupid and tyrannical. The life I've lived with you is abominable. When I married you I had money——"

He bowed.

"That's right," he said, encouragingly, "throw that in my face! Didn't I invest it for you?"

It was an unfortunate question.

"Yes, you did," she said, bitterly. "You put it into a luminous sign business. Luminous signs! And a month after war was declared, and the only thing you could get out of showing a luminous sign was six months' imprisonment!"

"How did I know there was going to be a war?" asked the exasperated man.

"You might have guessed it," she replied, illogically.

"Could I guess that London was to be plunged in darkness? I did my best. I should have made a million out of that fuse factory I started this year——"

"Yes, if it hadn't been for the armistice," she scoffed.

"How did I know there was going to be peace?" he roared.

She flounced past him on her way to the door.

"Oh, you never know anything!"

"There's one thing I know," he shouted after her.

"What's that?"

"One of these fine days I'll run away to America!"

Her scornful laugh came back through the slammed door.

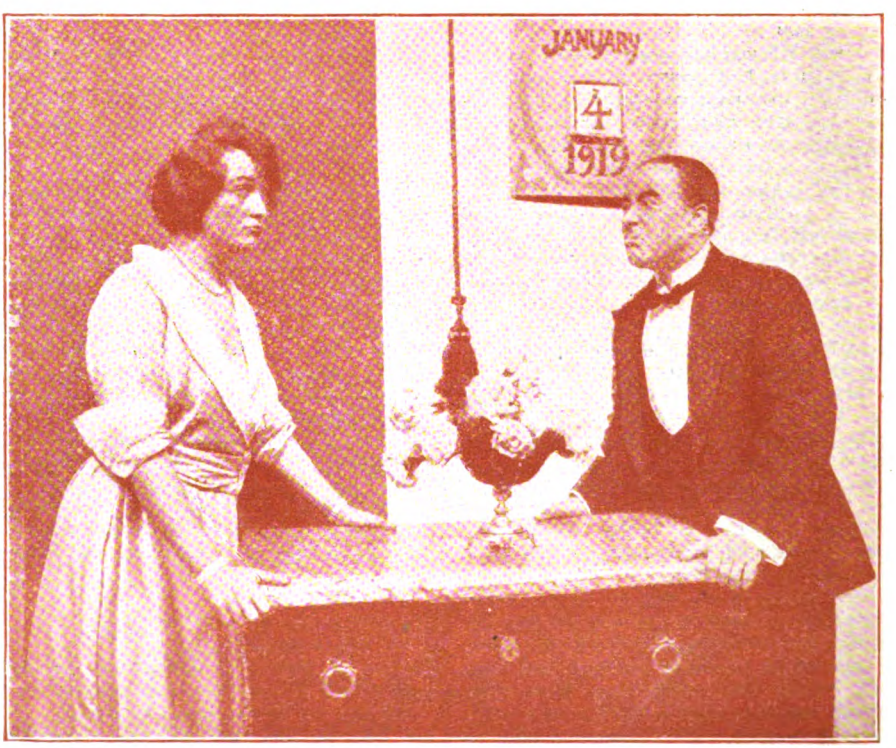
He threw himself upon the settee.

The money was gone and the wife remained. That was his luck. If it had been the other way about! If only it had been the other way about! If he could only live the years over again! If he could only be five years younger and knew what he knew!

He sat staring at the newspaper in his hand. There was a critique of a new play, a fairy play. Bah! Fairies were nonsense!

He laid the newspaper down on his knees. But suppose there were such things as fairies, and suppose they moved about this prosaic, industrialized world, as in the old days they moved through the woodland glebes; suppose by a wave of a magic wand a man could be transplanted back, back, back; and suppose that it were possible that the clock should be put back, and one had consciousness of all the things that were going to happen, the horses that were going to win races, the stocks which were going to rise, all the great events which must occur!

He heaved a deep sigh and looked up. He half-rose from the couch, for there before him, a bright and radiant figure in the dusky room, stood a brilliant presence. He knew it was a fairy because it was dressed as fairies should be dressed, and because she was bathed in a flood of silvery light which seemed to come



"'I MEAN, I'M FED UP, THAT'S WHAT I MEAN,' HE SNAPPED. 'AND SO AM I!' SHE CRIED."

from nowhere in particular. The little hands grasped a wand which twinkled and glittered with light.

Recovering from his initial astonishment he looked at her apprisingly. He felt it would be undignified and ill-bred to regard her as a phenomenon.

"Hector Smith," said a sweet, low voice, "I am your fairy godmother!"

"Oh, yes," said Hector Smith, politely.

"You have expressed a wish to be five years younger. Be happy, for to-morrow you will awake in 1914."

"Eh?" said Hector, sitting up. "I say, do you really mean that?"

She inclined her head.

"Wait a moment," said Hector, eagerly. "I must be the only one who knows it. D'ye understand? Because if everybody else knows it I shall be in the cart again."

She raised her wand and waved it slowly above his head.

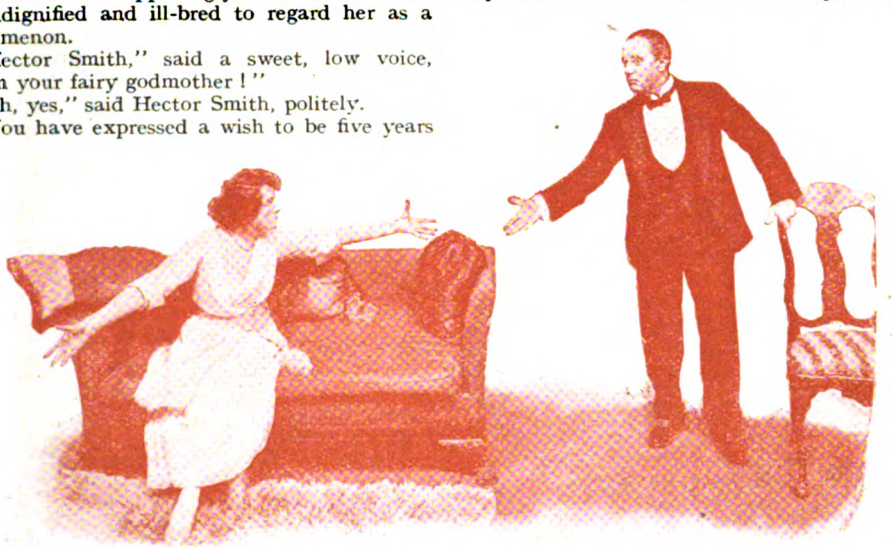
"I must be the only one who knows that there's going to be a war and all that sort of thing," said Hector, drowsily. A sense of languor was rapidly overcoming him. "I don't want . . ."

His head fell on his chest.

He did not know how long he had slept when he awoke with a jerk. He had a confused dream in which figured fairies and brilliant wands, and low, sweet voices mingled, and then he remembered that he had to see Tomkins who was liquidating his ill-fated fuse factory. He went to the study and 'phoned Tomkins, but, amazingly enough, Tomkins was not on the 'phone. He asked Exchange to connect him with Smith's Patent Fuse Factory, but Exchange was ignorant that such a place had ever existed.

"The telephone service," said Hector Smith, as he hung up the receiver, "is becoming more and more abominable."

He decided to write to the newspapers on the subject. He paused outside the drawing-room door, for he heard his wife moving about inside, and it was necessary to brace himself up for the ordeal. He was a little scared of Mary in her tantrums, and more scared that his apprehension should be known to her. But the girl who came across the room to meet him had no frown, no reproaches. She was one beaming smile, and she ran towards him and laid her hands upon his shoulders.



"'HOW DID I KNOW THERE WAS GOING TO BE A WAR?' ASKED THE EXASPERATED MAN. 'YOU MIGHT HAVE GUESSED IT,' SHE REPLIED, ILLOGICALLY."

"Dearie!" she kissed him, ecstatically; then noting the gloom in his face, "darling, whatever is the matter?"

"Matter?" he answered, suspiciously. "What's that you did? What's the matter with you?"

She looked at him in wonder.

"Nothing is the matter with me. I just kissed you, that's all."

He heaved a sigh. How did she know he had received his directors' cheque that day?

"How much do you want?" he asked, with resignation.

"Naughty boy, why do you say that?" she pouted. "Don't you love your diddlelums any more?"

He stared at her.

"Look here. What's up?" he asked, desperately. "I'll buy it! What's wrong with you?"

"Wrong?"

She was frankly astonished.

"Everything has gone wrong to-day," he growled. "I went to call up that fellow about the fuses——"

She frowned.

"Fuses? What are fuses?"

His suspicions returned.

"Don't pull my leg," he said, coldly. "I'm not in a mood for it. Try it on the other fellow."

"What other—fellow?"

He jerked his head to the door.

"He was here just now. I heard his voice."

A smile of understanding dawned on her face.

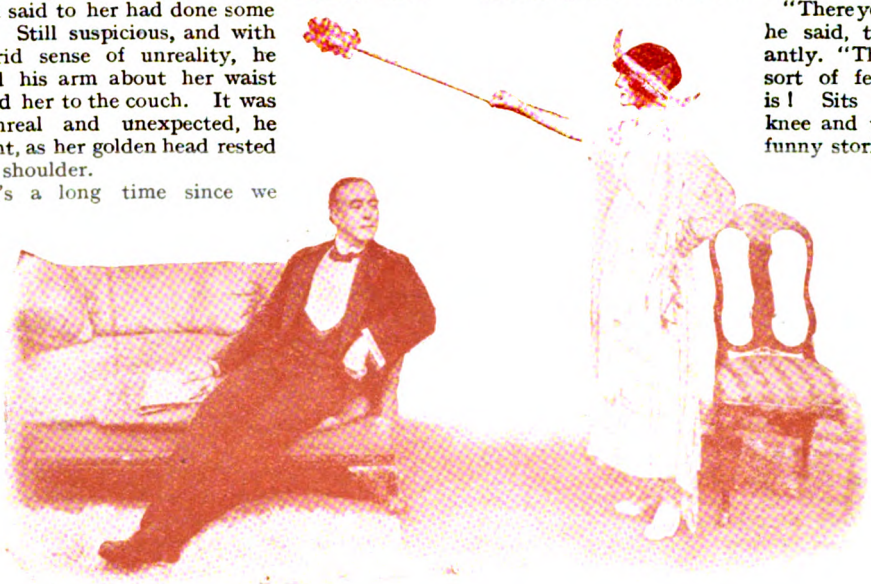
"Who, little Arthur?"

"Yes, little Arthur," he snarled, "the little hero!"

"Don't be silly, Hector," she laughed. "Arthur a hero!"

His rising wrath moderated. Evidently what he had said to her had done some good. Still suspicious, and with a horrid sense of unreality, he slipped his arm about her waist and led her to the couch. It was all unreal and unexpected, he thought, as her golden head rested on his shoulder.

"It's a long time since we did this," he said. "It reminds me of the raid nights."



"THE FAIRY GODMOTHER RAISED HER WAND AND WAVED IT SLOWLY ABOVE HIS HEAD."

She straightened herself up.

"The what nights?"

"The raid nights."

She laughed. Hector in the full ardour of that period which was neither youth nor middle-age, had been a tempestuous lover.

"Dear, you use such queer expressions!"

"Do you remember the syren?" he asked, after a pause, and her head nodded vigorously.

"Yes, the cat—but I got you away from her."

"And how we used to go down into the cellar?" he mused. It seemed a thousand years ago.

She straightened up. It was she who was suspicious.

"We never did," she protested. "Really, Hector! I hope you're not thinking of somebody else?"

Before he could answer Jane came in, and Jane, curiously enough, looked much younger.

"Will there be three to dinner, madam?" asked the maid.

Mary nodded.

"Who is the third?" demanded Mr. Smith.

"Oh, no one," said his wife, airily. "I asked Arthur to stay."

He sprang to his feet.

"Arthur! Confound the fellow, hasn't he gone? I won't have him. Do you understand, Mary, I—won't—have—him!"

Again the look of blank astonishment on her face.

"But why not?"

"He's such a nice little gentleman, sir," pleaded Jane. "He sat on my knee and told me such funny stories."

Hector glared from the maid to his wife.

"There you are!" he said, triumphantly. "That's the sort of fellow he is! Sits on her knee and tells her funny stories!"

To his amazement she laughed.

"It's not worth while getting angry—he can dine in the kitchen."

"In the kitchen!"

"Of course, he doesn't care," Mary went on, calmly, "so long as he goes to the White City."

"With whom?"

"Well, I'll take him," said Mary, indifferently. "I rather like the Roly-Poly and the Wiggle-Wag."

With a mighty effort Mr. Smith controlled himself.

"You can't go to the White City. It's been requisitioned by the Government four years ago," he said. "The White City is closed, I tell you. It's where the C3 men get their A1 gratuity—everybody knows that."

There was a strained silence, during which Jane tip-toed from the room.

Hector saw something in his wife's eyes that looked like fear, and failed to diagnose its cause.

"I'm sorry I lost my temper," he said, penitently; "the fact is I'm jealous."

The fear was replaced by a gleam of interest.

"Jealous? Of whom?"

He made a little gesture to cover his discomfort.

"Of you—and Arthur."

"But you're mad," she gasped; "at his age——"

"At his age," said Mr. Smith, icily, "I had been thrown out of the Empire twice."

He did not explain the degree of worldliness which this experience implied, but he left her to gather that it represented a particularly lurid form of precocity.

"I don't understand you to-night," she said, shaking her head.

"I don't understand myself," said Mr. Smith, rising. "I think I'll run down to the club, I promised to meet an ace."

"An ace? I thought you'd given up cards."

"You don't understand me—this fellow brought down thirty."

"Thirty what?"

"Boche."

"It isn't 'bosh'!" she exploded. "How did he bring them down?"

Hector groaned.

"He got on their tails and crashed them," he explained, patiently.

She was shocked.

"Poor things! I suppose they broke quite easily?" she asked.

He looked at her.

"I don't know what you are talking about," he said, irritably. "I am speaking about a fellow who has been 'mentioned' six times."

She shook her head.

"This is the first time you have mentioned him to me," she said; "what has he done?"

"No, the tank went over the top and a minnie dropped in front of him."

She was interested again.

"Poor girl," she said, sympathetically, "and did he help her up?"

"No; you see, a flying pig burst just behind him."

"But what did he do with Minnie?" she demanded.

She could not grapple with pigs that flew, but Minnie was someone tangible.

"Oh, she got him in the leg," he stated, carelessly.

She was grave now.

"I see, she wasn't a lady?"

"Of course she wasn't a lady," he wailed. "I have told you it wasn't a lady! It was a minnewerfer."

She did not want to hear about Miss Werfer or even of a low person to whom he made glib reference—a Miss Emma Gee. This friend of her husband's seemed to have low tastes. He crashed people, he got on their tails.

"And Big Bertha——" Hector was saying when she stopped him.

"I don't think I want to meet your friend," she said, and made for the door.

He didn't understand her. Usually she was as full of the jargon of the war as the most ardent subaltern. Now she professed ignorance

'NAUGHTY BOY, WHY DO YOU SAY THAT? DON'T YOU LOVE YOUR DIDDLELUMS ANY MORE?"

"Done! Why, in the early days before he started flipping, he took a pill-box all by himself!"

Her mouth opened.

"A whole box!" she gasped.

"You see," he explained, "he was in a tank, and when they went over the top——"

"Over the top of the tank?" she asked, hazily.

and demanded an elucidation of the most commonplace phrase.

He was pondering on this fact when the maid came into the room. She stood nervously waiting, and Hector guessed her errand.

"Well?" he growled.

"I—I thought I would ask you, sir," she faltered; "I was going to ask the mistress if —if she would give me a little rise."

"A rise again!" he groaned. This was the third or was it the fourth time . . . ?

"But, sir?"

"Now listen to me," he said, severely, "I know that living is expensive, and coals are dear, and I am willing to give you another rise. But this must be the very last time. You can have five pounds a month, but not a penny more."

She did not swoon. She was too well-bred a servant.

"Five pounds a month! Oh, thank you, master, thank you! Oh, you are most good" —she grew incoherent.

Hector raised his eyebrows. He thought she was unusually grateful. His wife returned at that moment to hear his news.

"By the way, dear, I've just raised Jane's wages."

Usually she objected to his interfering in her domestic affairs, but now she was most amiable.

"I promised her I would—she seems a nice girl."

"Yes," said Hector. "I'm giving her five pounds a month."

His wife grasped a chair for support.

"Are you mad?" She beckoned Jane, for her earlier suspicions were now certainties.

"Fetch a doctor," she said, under her breath. "The master isn't well. I only pay her eighteen pounds a year."

She tried to say this in a light conversational tone, but her voice shook.

"You only——?" Something was very wrong, and he called the maid to him. "Ask Dr. Sawyer to step round. Mrs. Smith isn't quite herself," he said.

"Get Dr. Thomas," demanded Mary, sharply.

Thomas! Thomas was in Mesopotamia! It was clear now. The worry of the past years had turned her brain. It was a flattering explanation for the preference she had lately shown to Arthur. They watched one another apprehensively after the girl had gone, then:—

"Feel better, ducky?" he asked, huskily.

"Has that nasty wuzzy feeling gone, lovey?" her voice was a nervous squeak.

Dr. Thomas had the flat opposite, and Dr. Thomas was coming out of his flat when the frightened maid had literally flung herself upon him.

"They're both mad," she babbled, and the startled doctor followed her to where two people, each standing at the extreme end of a long drawing-room, were watching one another in silence.

Hector saw him and uttered an exclamation of astonishment.

"By Jove, I thought you were in Bagdad?"

The doctor laid his soothing hand on the other's shoulder.

"Of course—Bagdad! Ah, that's the place —we'll soon put you right, old man."

Ignoring the implication that he wasn't right, Mr. Smith whispered something in the other's ear.

"Of course she is," replied Thomas, indulgently, and caught Mary's eye and Mary's significant signal.

It was at that moment that Arthur came in —Arthur in his Eton suit, with his cherubic face stained with jam. Hector looked at him and his jaw dropped.

"What the devil have you dressed like this for?" he demanded.

"Because I'm going to school, Mr. Smith."

"To school? How old are you?"

"Fourteen—nearly."

"Fourteen!" repeated Hector, hollowly. "Is it possible——?"

On Mary's desk was a calendar and to this he walked.

"Nineteen fourteen! Mary, I understand all. I will explain. You're not mad—it was the fairy—who put back the clock—my wish was granted!"

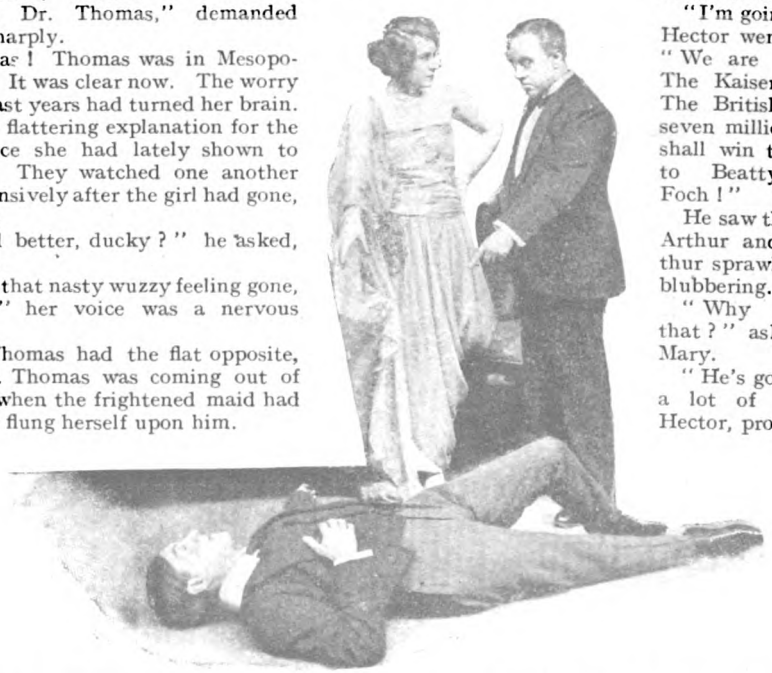
The doctor looked at Mary and Mary looked at the doctor.

"I'm going to prophesy," Hector went on, excitedly. "We are going to war! The Kaiser will abdicate! The British Army will be seven millions strong! We shall win the war, thanks to Beatty, Haig, and Foch!"

He saw the round face of Arthur and—smack! Arthur sprawled on the floor blubbering.

"Why did you do that?" asked the terrified Mary.

"He's going to cause me a lot of trouble," said Hector, prophetically.



"HE SAW THE ROUND FACE OF ARTHUR AND—SMACK! ARTHUR SPRAWLED ON THE FLOOR BLUBBERING."

The Fall of Hoveller's Cliff

By HAROLD STEEVENS

ILLUSTRATED BY TOM PEDDIE

I.

WITH never a moment's warning, a hundred tons of earth detached itself from Hoveller's Cliff and sank like a plummet to the beach below.

With it went Hulbert Oldershaw—for about two feet of the downward way. Then he roused himself, wheeled round, and flung up his hands in a frantic clutch at the torn turf edge which was the only stable thing within his range of vision at that agitating moment. His right hand caught and held; the left hand missed its hold but scraped the turf and tore a nail to the quick.

Heart in mouth, he clutched again, successfully this time, and so hung with both arms extended. Then, like a wise man, knowing how soon the arms will tire in this position, he made a vigorous effort to hoist himself while strength was fresh. Also, instant action was a refuge from panic, which he feared.

But when he took purchase for the hoist, he felt the turf give under pressure of his fingers and start to rend. He eased his clutch at once and steadied his legs, and his nerves. Cautiously, lest his body should sway and imperil his hold, he felt forward with his foot.

Nothing there. He tried again with the other foot—still nothing. Then he realized that the cliff was scooped away, that his legs were dangling without support or any chance of support over ninety feet of space, and that his hands were clinging to a precarious shelf of turf which might give way at any minute.

For the third time he fought back imminent panic. He forced himself to be cool, suppressing imagination and fixing his mind on the management of his fingers, which must distribute their pressure nicely, and on the control of his body, which must be absolutely still.

The strain was terrible; it was breaking his fingers, tearing the muscles of his arms and dragging his arms from their sockets. His strength was ebbing with the pain of it. He clenched his teeth; he would not give in, he would not, *would* not! The savage exertion of his will congested his brain. His head began to swim; he closed his eyes. His idea of time became confused; he found himself forgetting where he was. . . .

He emerged from momentary oblivion and knew that cool hands had settled on his wrists, had felt for a hold, then closed firmly. The relief was delicious. When he opened his eyes and looked up at the hands which had saved him from his agony, he saw that the fingers were slender and the skin was delicate—a woman's hands.

The hold on his wrists, little powerful though it was, gave him an extraordinary sense of support. More curiously, it gave him back his strength and, most important of all, confidence to use it. It meant everything to him.

No longer afraid of the crumbling cornice, he began to work his fingers forward, the other pair of hands aiding him understandingly. Presently his palms rested on firm ground. When he paused, soft wrists and smooth, warm arms closed down upon his hands, clamping them to the turf. And when he braced himself and strove with all his might to win the ledge, the hands on his wrists relaxed to give them play.

Her sense of touch was very delicate, but her strength was not sufficient for his weight. His elbows nearly reached the ledge, but not quite, and there for ghastly moments he hung, slipping, slipping back, and she powerless to stay him. Again he was at grips with death, again he fought with all the will that was in him—head bent forward till his clenched teeth grazed the turf; nails futilely clawing; beads of sweat upon his brow; and his whole body quivering with the effort to squeeze from itself another ounce of force.

But the law of gravity is inexorable, and he

was as good as gone, when suddenly the hand which held his better wrist let go and seized his hair.

There was no mercy in that grasp, but it saved him. The torture was excruciating. Like a far-spent steed responding to the spur, he gathered the last of his strength, writhed up to meet and ease the torment in his scalp, and worked his elbows over. A leg followed carefully; the rest was simple. When he was safe the hands let go.

With eyes dull from utter exhaustion he saw her lying flat on her face, her brow against the turf and her toes still hooked over a big white stone, which marks the coastguard's nightly patrol.

His brain was numb; he had just sense enough to crawl a couple of yards from the edge of death before he collapsed, rolled over on his back, and lay still with arms outspread and feeble breath. The solid earth was heaven—now welcome nothingness. . . .

A voice was calling him; he opened his eyes and saw her stooping over him. Her method of dealing with the situation was at least original, for she dropped on her knees beside him, looked into his face with frightened eyes, and earnestly demanded:—

"Was your grandmother a bobtailed sheep-dog?"

Hulbert sat up. Surprise corrected his lingering inclination to swoon. He stared back into her clear brown eyes. She transferred her gaze to his hair.

"Not that I know of," he began, dazily, then put his hand to his smarting head and asked: "Do you think it is too long?"

"Not in the circumstances," said she, smiling faintly. "There! You're feeling better already. I knew you would. Sorry I had to be vulgar."

"Not at all," he said. "Only you made me think of my old sergeant-major."

"Sorrier still," she said. "I made you sit up, though, didn't I?"

Her face was frank and free from guile; her complexion a sunny blend of pink and tan. She wore no hat, and a dark cloud of hair, still damp from the sea, enveloped her shoulders.

She was nervous, but he was not aware of it because he was nervous, too. Yet his eyes would not leave her face.

"You saved me——" he began, awkwardly.

"From a watery grave? Nothing of the kind. The tide is out. Come and look."

"Well, you're plucky!" he gasped.

"Have to be, when young men go about the country hanging themselves on cliffs."

He still hesitated.

"Come along. 'Hair of the dog,' you know," she said in a warm, encouraging way that he could not resist.

Side by side they crawled to the edge, then lay down flat and peeped over. Far below they saw a great moraine of earth and stones jutting out across the beach, its foot already lapped with a ring of foam. Sixty feet below the jutting cornice of disrupted turf the slope of the cliff was strewn with rugged lumps of earth and slabs of turf, boulders, upturned stunted trees and scrubby bushes, all intermixed in extraordinary confusion—a little picture of elemental chaos. Above it, nothing was visible.

Hulbert shut his eyes, shuddering at the fate which must have been his but for the girl at his side. But she laid a firm hand on his, and he, obedient to her ruling, looked again steadfastly until he had mastered himself and could look without qualm.

"A green woodpecker couldn't climb it," was her only comment.

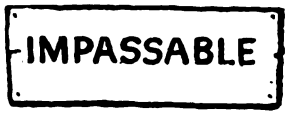
They crawled back together and stood up, she still motherly and solicitous, he protesting that he felt perfectly fit. His soul was like to burst with gratitude, but before he could utter a word of it, with a wave of the hand and a dancing smile she was gone.

II.

THOSE who are interested in coast erosion do not need to be reminded that Hoveller's Cliff is a part of the coast where the process is especially active. The soft conglomerate formation offers no defence against the gigantic waves raised by the north-easterly gales which lash the coast in winter time. When the gale chances to coincide with the southward sweep of a spring tide the results are invariably serious; the base of the cliff is washed away, the face is undermined, and sooner or later a fall must ensue.

Some assert that the land is slowly subsiding. Old salts still living in the neighbouring fishing hamlet of Dunestrand recall the time when Hoveller's Cliff extended a hundred yards beyond the Smuggler's Path. In the course of years, successive falls have brought the edge of the cliff nearer and nearer to the path; and the fall which nearly cost Hulbert Oldershaw his life took the path with it and left a bare six feet of ground between the edge of the cliff and the gardens of Hoveller's Towers.

Now, the new owner of the Towers, Sir Perceval Dacing, was a man of the shires who knew not Dunestrand. So he took upon himself, in the convenient name of public safety, to board up this narrow passage way and to erect a notice-board:—



An awkward prohibition, because the Smuggler's Path is the nearest way to the gully or cleft in the cliff called Hoveller's Gap, which is the only means of descent to this part of the beach. No doubt Sir Perceval's intention was that the grateful wayfarer should turn inland, make a *détour* of a mile round his property, and strike the Gap a hundred yards farther on. The scheme did not appeal to the native mind.

The first child of the sea who came by was Hezekiah Colby. Pausing only to make an appropriate exclamation, he forthwith removed with his powerful hands enough of the boarding

to permit of convenient passage, and hastened with the news to the taproom of the Lord Nelson at Dunestrand. The conclave of jerseyed giants there assembled, at first thunderstruck, subsequently became explosive, and ultimately derisive.

Not for a long time had the sentiment of Dunestrand been so outraged. Next day the number of stalwart fishermen whose business took them to

"HE OPENED HIS EYES AND LOOKED UP AT THE HANDS WHICH HAD SAVED HIM FROM HIS AGONY, AND SAW THAT THE FINGERS WERE SLENDER AND THE SKIN DELICATE—A WOMAN'S HANDS."

Hoveller's Gap was remarkable. The Smuggler's Path was frequented from dawn till nightfall, and long before that not a vestige of Sir Perceval's barrier remained *in situ*. Indeed, some of the handier fragments were even then usefully employed in warming the suppers of the more youthful members of the community. Dunestrand retired to its early couch in the soothing consciousness of work well done.

Two days passed in which numerous self-appointed scouts detected no trace of hostile activity, and the inference was accordingly drawn that the baronet had wisely decided to abandon his iniquitous project. This delusion was based upon complete ignorance of Sir Perceval's character.

A report was brought to the Lord Nelson on the evening of the third day which gave Dunestrand its first conception of the strength and resolution of its antagonist. Obviously the hours which Dunestrand had permitted itself to spend in mild enjoyment of an easy triumph had been occupied by the baronet in collecting the material for a second and far more serious attack upon the rights of the indigenes.

In place of the flimsy fence, Sir Perceval's minions had constructed a stockade of fir trunks sunk deep in the earth, bound together with iron bands,

and stayed with four wire ropes. This was an obstruction not to be torn down by any hands, and its height and the line of barbed wire along the top discouraged the climber.

Against a flanking attack, the new proprietor, by lavish use of barbed wire, had converted his bank and hedge of tamarisk and gorse into a formidable strong-point which nobody with any respect for hands and clothes would lightly face. A new and larger notice-board was nailed to the stockade :—

Among the fisherfolk of Dunestrand, light-hearted derision gave place to anger.

Now Hulbert, after his adventure on the cliff, had taken steps to discover the identity of the girl who had saved him from destruction. Waking or sleeping, her brown eyes looked into his. Those tense moments lived with her on the brink of death seemed to bind his very soul to hers. Beyond the conjecture that she might be "some of the new people at the Towers," the hamlet could not assist him.

This new sensation rudely interrupted his investigations. He was not himself a native of Dunestrand, but his affection for the place and the people had long since made him as one of themselves. Their quarrels were his, and he regarded the closing of the cliff path as a piece of barefaced robbery.

Generations of the hardy folk who take their lives in their hands to wrest a living from the bitter sea had used it without hindrance. Free passage of their native cliffs was as much their birthright as the salt sea air they breathed. To see their hard lives made harder and, worse still, embittered at the caprice of a stranger, made his blood boil. Nor should it happen if he could prevent it.

Hulbert cheerfully undertook the leadership in the serious operations which followed, as cheerfully disregarding the legal bearing of the matter, if it had any. In point of fact, little leadership was needed, for every man knew just what had to be done and how it had to be done ; moreover, co-operation is second nature to the people of the sea.

The arrangements were made with the necessary stealth at the Lord Nelson, and were quickly known to every man, woman, and child in Dunestrand. On the following Saturday afternoon a half-dozen stalwart men and hefty lads gathered outside the tavern for "a little stroll to Hoveller's Gap."

Everyone carried an implement of some kind—pick, shovel, crowbar, axe, or saw ; one robust youth had an old boat's anchor with flukes carefully sharpened. Hulbert took with him a pair of powerful wire-cutters which had done good service in bloodier scraps than this promised to be.

In high spirits but most unmilitary order the conspirators straggled along the Smuggler's Path, beguiling the way by discourse, flamboyant or sober, according to the temperament of the individual.

"If I get a holt on that there Sir Perceval," cried young Absalom Peake, "I swear I'll take him off in feyther's boo-ut, and Eb and me'll keelhaul him till he's nigh drownded."

"Aye, that us wull," grinned brother Ebenezer mightily pleased with the sporting project.

"That'll do, lads, that'll do," Hezekiah Colby interposed. "There bain't no call to speak spiteful o' the man, howsoever bad he be, and we doan't rightly know as it's hisself is most to blame. Belike it's they that's under him more'n hisself, if truth be known. It's got to come down, however."

"Mark ye!" put in the chastened Ebenezer, repeating the oft-heard philosophy of his elders, "if he take ground what bain't rightly his'n, that'll not do the man no good, that it wun't, never!"

Arrived at the scene of action, the men peeled off their jerseys and set to it roundly. First of all, Hezekiah bent his broad back, and Hulbert, kneeling on it, snipped the barbed wire from the top of the stockade, then pulled himself up and dropped on the other side. Absalom and Ebenezer were quickly boosted over, and a pick and a shovel pitched after them.

Then on both sides of the stockade at once, picking and shovelling alternately, the fishermen cleared the footings. Hulbert sang out a warning and cut two of the wires at the ground level. The heavy timber barrier heeled over sideways. The other two wires were likewise cut, and then, all hands hauling, they dragged out the entire stockade, drew it back from the cliff, and dumped it on the grass.

Absalom and Ebenezer expressed a keen desire to heave it over on to the beach, and indeed it would have been a heartening sight to see it go pitching down the cliff ; but soberer heads would not countenance the proposal.

"That be property," said Hezekiah ; "we'll not damage nawthun more'n we be forced to do. Let it be."

"Us wayunt be spiteful an' all," agreed Sam Asterby, who was Lincolnshire-bred.

They filled in the hole, trod it down, and made all shipshape. From start to finish the whole thing was well and expeditiously done without any kind of interruption.

III.

Now, however, just as they were pulling on their jerseys to go home, some men came hastily through a wicket-gate in the hedge and made towards the demolition party. One in the dress of a country gentleman was rightly presumed to be the baronet ; he was a big man, with short grey hair and a vigorous face. Two of the others were keepers in velveteens. A fourth was Tom Pearson, the constable. Everybody knew

Tom, and Tom, inconveniently, knew everybody. His presence here was ominous.

Sir Perceval, marching a little ahead, brought his party along at a rapid pace. His carriage was purposeful, indeed aggressive, and as soon as he came within twenty yards of the fishermen, he called out in a sharp and angry voice :—

"Who are you? What are you doing here?"

No answer. Hulbert stepped forward a pace or two, and the fishermen closed up behind and about him. With the touching diffidence of the unlettered, these men, who feared neither sea nor storm nor the death which lurks therein, nor any man as man to man, were more than willing to entrust the argument of words to Hulbert's handling.

Sir Perceval's pace abated slightly when he came closer and encountered the steady gaze of the fisherfolk. He made straight for Hulbert, and stopped within a yard of his face.

When Sir Perceval stopped the rest stopped, not unwillingly. The two keepers, strangers to the county like their master, looked across at the fishermen with that rather sullen expression of countenance which the unsociable nature of a gamekeeper's duties induces; their eyes, roving over these stalwart beings of another world from theirs, betrayed curiosity but not hostility, which would in fact have been foolish in the circumstances. The constable was plainly uncomfortable; he was between the millstones of duty and friendship.

The landowner's face was crimson with anger, and he spluttered over his words, rattling out questions one after another.

"What's all this? What are you doing on my land?"

"Are you the King?" asked Hulbert, coolly but forcibly. "This is the King's highway, and if you're not the King it can't be yours."

Sir Perceval was in no mood to appreciate whimsical discussion, and the idea that he was being made fun of incensed him still more.

"How dare you bring this pack of riff-raff on to my land? How dare you break down my fence? Who are you?"

The word "riff-raff" roused Hulbert.

"And who the blazes are you?" he demanded, raising his voice. "You insolent land-grabber! You upstart thief! How dare you block the Smuggler's Path?"

Now Sir Perceval Dacing's title is the reward of industry, and "upstart" did not soothe him at all.

"You cursed agitator!" he shouted. "You shall pay for this. I've blocked no path. There's no path here—it's in the sea, and for two pins I'll throw you after it and your gang of wreckers with you!"

Excited by his own words, he lost his self-command and struck Hulbert in the face.

An exclamation of anger came from the group of fishermen, and Hezekiah and young Ebenezer, who were standing nearest, started forward towards the baronet.

Hulbert, flushing under the blow, had instinctively raised his fist to return it, but the man was twice his age and he checked himself, with fist at shoulder.

At that moment there was a sound of swishing bushes, and a girl broke recklessly through the tamarisks on top of the bank beside the barbed wire.

Hulbert would have known her among ten thousand; she was his girl of the cliff. Tossing away anger like a useless garment, his spirit sang for gladness at the sight of her.

A charming girlish figure in short blue cotton frock and brown stockings, outlining delicate ankles and the reticent curve of the leg, she stood there for an instant silhouetted against the sky, surveying and interpreting the angry scene below—the two men face to face, Sir Perceval quivering with rage and Hulbert's fist poised against him; the strong, tanned faces of the fishermen aflush with wrathful indignation; the keepers gripping their half-lifted sticks in readiness for whatever might befall. Tom Pearson alone, guardian of the peace and devotee of the quiet life, standing a little apart, raised a deprecating hand.

Her flashing eyes dwelt on Hulbert.

"You coward!" she cried in burning scorn, and, jumping lightly down, darted in front of the baronet.

"Coward!" she repeated, facing Hulbert. "He's twice as old as you!" Then, turning to the baronet for a moment: "Has he hurt you, daddy dear? The cowardly brute!" Her contempt was withering. Hulbert was devoutly thankful to know it was unmerited. His arm was by his side now, but he could not take his eyes from her. Every moment of that vision was a draught of delight.

Sir Perceval contended with an uncomfortable sense of foolishness. The keepers gazed absently towards the distant coverts; the fishermen seemed much interested in the horizon, though to the casual eye it was absolutely untenanted.

"Nonsense, Philippa!" said the baronet, haltingly. "Go away, dear. This is no place for you. I'll join you presently." He took out a red bandana and mopped his face.

For answer Philippa linked her arm in her father's.

"Come away from these horrid people, daddy," she said. "They are not worth bothering about."

After a momentary contest between his sense of dignity and habitual deference to her judgment, Sir Perceval allowed himself to be turned about by the small hand of his daughter and marched off to the wicket-gate. The rest of his party followed slowly.

A little disappointed, a little chastened, but immensely relieved by her departure, the fishermen quietly gathered up their implements. Ebenezer broke the silence.

"That be a fine wench," he said, oracularly. "Belike she'll be his daughter."

His remark was received in tolerant silence, but it relieved the atmosphere of constraint.

"'Twas a foul blow," said Hezekiah, shaking his head. "I wonder ye could stand it. Why

"'YOU COWARD!' SHE CRIED, IN BURNING SCORN, AS SHE

didn't ye tell the lass when she spoke so shameful?"

"I didn't think of it," Hulbert truthfully replied.

During the ensuing week the whole affair was discussed in all its visible bearings. Tom Pearson, in particular, invited condolence and won commendation for the discretion with which he had discharged his official duty against his personal sympathies. Sir Perceval gave no sign either of intention to prosecute (the news would have come quickly through Pearson) or of the restoration of his barrier. General satisfaction was expressed at the successful manner in which the public right had been vindicated.

Hulbert, for his part, considered his black eye a small price to pay for the opening of the path. Not for twenty black eyes would he have foregone the delight of seeing once more the girl of his secret devotion, and of discovering her name and habitation.

Unfortunately, the circumstances in which he acquired the information made it difficult for him to use it. But sanguine youth makes little of such obstacles. He decided that while loyalty to his friends forbade him to visit the stronghold of the enemy, gratitude compelled him to write

JUMPED LIGHTLY DOWN AND DARTED IN FRONT OF THE BARONET."

and thank the princess who dwelt therein for saving his life. This he did, and, in return, he received a polite but chilly note of acknowledgment.

Hulbert refused to be chilled ; on the contrary, the fires of his devotion were richly fed by the treasured sheet of paper touched by her own hands and bearing her own words written by her own fingers.

Did she still scorn him for a coward ? Perhaps ; perhaps not. He did not worry about it, for he was living in a dream world created by his own adoration. He believed in love and its power to conquer all things. How or when his love for Philippa Dacing would triumph over the obstacles which stood between him and her he had no conception.

IV.

WENDING his way to Hoveller's Cliff one sunny day, partly no doubt to see that all was right with the Smuggler's Path, but certainly also in the vague hope of seeing Philippa and possibly speaking with her, Hulbert was astounded to find the path again obstructed.

This time the baronet had spared neither expense nor pains to make the barrier permanent. Instead of using timber cut from the estate, he had sent to town for an iron fence consisting of a

strong frame threaded with stout wires very close together, very high and very sharp. Iron spikes in the shape of a quadrant stuck out over the cliff.

Through the fence Hulbert descried Sir Perceval; he looked like an animal in a cage, except that he was contemplating the structure with far greater satisfaction than the best regulated animal could be expected to feel.

"Good morning, Sir Perceval," said Hulbert, airily. The egregious fellow already regarded the baronet as a potential father-in-law, and was disposed to be kind to him on that account.

Sir Perceval stared at Hulbert through the bars. His manner was not cordial, though it may be surmised that the recollection of their last meeting on this spot moderated his asperity; he had felt foolish himself, and Hulbert had certainly looked foolish, whatever he might have felt. A fellow feeling makes us kind. Also there was still the stain on Hulbert's eye.

"Well, young man," said the baronet, laying a hand on the fence, "you won't break this down in a hurry."

"We shall get it down, though, hurry or not," said Hulbert, calmly.

Sir Perceval flared up at once. "Look here, Mr.—— "

"Oldershaw," said Hulbert.

"I've been easy with you people so far, Mr. Oldershaw. Next time you'll have the law to deal with. I warn you!" cried the baronet.

"The law is on our side," said Hulbert, unperturbed—his ignorance of the law was complete. Then added: "And right as well."

The irascible baronet's face turned ruby red. "Right!" he cried, "you've no right to be standing where you are, you young——"

A long-drawn cry came faintly up to them.

"Help! He–elp!" A woman's cry or a girl's.

Hulbert was at the verge of the cliff in an instant, holding on to the fence, while his eyes searched the glittering surface of the sea.

"My God! she's in the Drift!"

It was too true. At the foot of the ness called Hoveller's Cliff is a submerged bank formed originally perhaps of *débris* from the cliff. The ebb-tide dropping back towards the north strikes this bank and is deflected seawards, producing the strong current known as Hoveller's Drift.

Bathers who know the locality give the Drift a wide berth, for it has carried many a one to his doom.

In the sweep of the current Hulbert discerned the black head of the swimmer. Her face was turned towards the shore and she was swimming strongly; her neck, very white against the dark trailing mass of her hair, rose up at every stroke. But no earthly swimmer can master a four-knot tide race. Swimming towards the land, she was drifting out to sea.

The baronet saw her almost as soon as Hulbert. His cry of anguish went to Hulbert's heart.

"It's my daughter! Quick! The Gap!" and Sir Perceval turned to run.

Then he remembered the fence and turned again. Hulbert had already made up his mind and was trying to swarm up the wires. It was useless; the wires were too thin to give hold for his hands.

"Here!" cried the baronet, "put your foot on my back!" And he bent down and jammed himself against the fence. But the wires were too close for Hulbert's toe to pass through. And now he saw that, even if he could swarm up, the long spikes on top were impossible for human flesh to cross. He threw up his jacket, but the spikes pierced the cloth like muslin. For the purpose for which it was designed the fence was deadly effective.

"Help!" The cry from the sea was weaker and shorter, as though the swimmer were losing breath.

Sir Perceval's love for his daughter was genuine and deep. All the affection in his passionate nature was centred in her; she was the core of his life. Now, helpless to save her, he saw her perishing before his eyes. No swimmer himself, he saw the one man who might have saved her prevented by the impassable fence which his own hand had set up. He saw himself the murderer of his own beloved child. In his despair he went mad and cursed himself. He seized the wires and shook them savagely, gnashing his teeth.

Hulbert, trained and tested in war, took a grip of himself and looked down for something to get him over the fence and so to the Gap. His eye lighted on the old stockade lying in the grass; he pounced upon it and tried to drag it to the fence, thinking to use it as an inclined plane up which to scramble. One tug showed him that the idea was useless; he could hardly move the mass of timber, much less lift it without help, and Sir Perceval, the only man in hail, was cut off from him by the fence and might just as well be a thousand miles away.

His heart sank. Oh, if she died he would not live! Better far to jump the cliff and meet her spirit as it fled!

Oh for a rope! But ninety-foot ropes are not left lying about on cliffs.

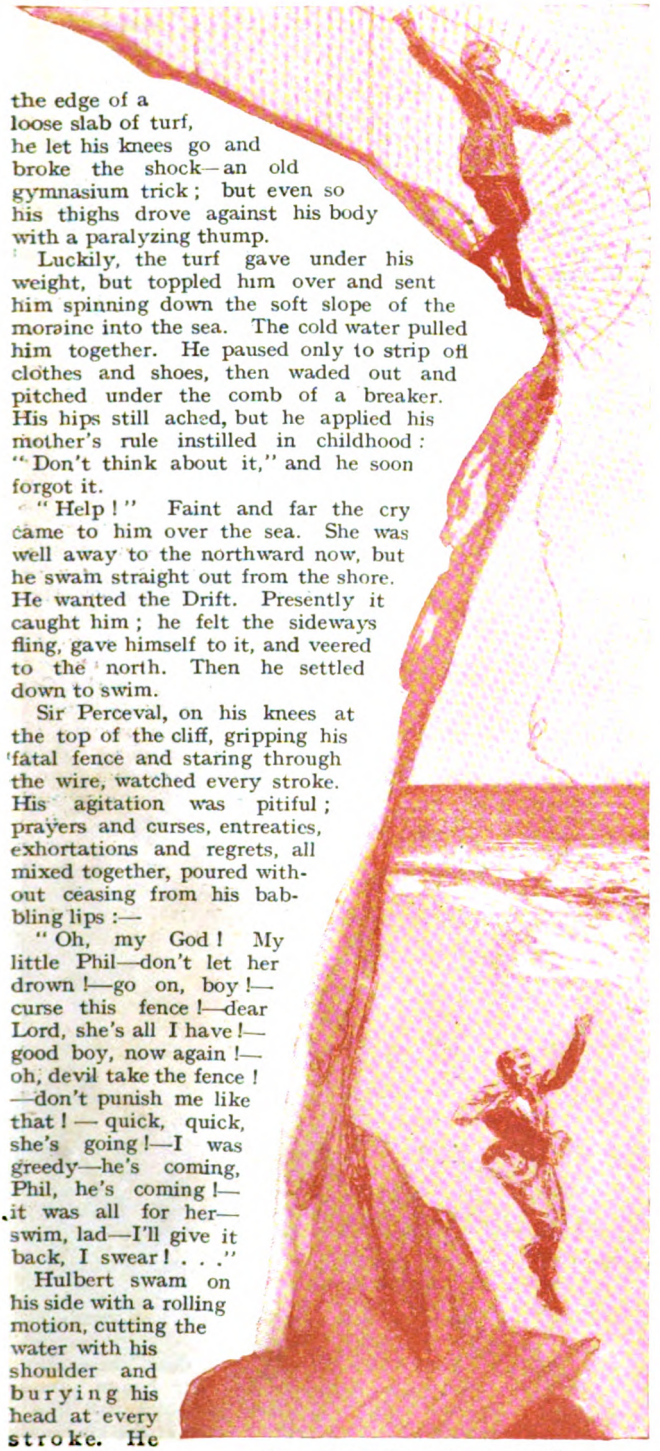
Ah, the stays! Why not try? In a moment he had whipped out his wire-cutters and was nipping off the four long lines—strong, supple stuff of many strands—from the discarded stockade. Desperately cool, throwing all his energy of brain and muscle into the task, he knotted them together swiftly and without fumbling into a single rope, hitched one end of it to the foot of the iron fence, and with the rope in his hand slid over the cliff.

The wire was thin and smooth, and slipped through his hands, but the knots checked him. He managed to twist his body round so that he faced the sea. The last length had no knot.

He dropped into space.

Down, down he went, flinging arms and body into grotesque contortions in the effort to keep his body poised, while his eyes searched downwards for a landing place—which he could not choose. He held his breath; the air rushed past him. His velocity became terrific.

It was all a matter of instants. He prepared himself for the impact, and, as his heels struck



"HE DROPPED INTO SPACE."

the edge of a loose slab of turf, he let his knees go and broke the shock—an old gymnasium trick; but even so his thighs drove against his body with a paralyzing thump.

Luckily, the turf gave under his weight, but toppled him over and sent him spinning down the soft slope of the moraine into the sea. The cold water pulled him together. He paused only to strip off clothes and shoes, then waded out and pitched under the comb of a breaker. His hips still ached, but he applied his mother's rule instilled in childhood: "Don't think about it," and he soon forgot it.

"Help!" Faint and far the cry came to him over the sea. She was well away to the northward now, but he swam straight out from the shore. He wanted the Drift. Presently it caught him; he felt the sideways fling, gave himself to it, and veered to the north. Then he settled down to swim.

Sir Perceval, on his knees at the top of the cliff, gripping his fatal fence and staring through the wire, watched every stroke. His agitation was pitiful; prayers and curses, entreaties, exhortations and regrets, all mixed together, poured without ceasing from his babbling lips:—

"Oh, my God! My little Phil—don't let her drown!—go on, boy!—curse this fence!—dear Lord, she's all I have!—good boy, now again!—oh, devil take the fence!—don't punish me like that!—quick, quick, she's going!—I was greedy—he's coming, Phil, he's coming!—it was all for her—swim, lad—I'll give it back, I swear!..."

Hulbert swam on his side with a rolling motion, cutting the water with his shoulder and burying his head at every stroke. He swam smoothly, regularly, and without flurry, but he held back nothing of himself; his single desire was to reach her, and to that end he put every ounce of his force into his stroke and gradually increased his rate of striking. His legs worked like hammers. The pace was killing—let it kill! He would last until he reached her.

He should be near her now. Another stroke or two, and he came over on his chest to look. Nothing ahead—could he have passed her? He turned about, looked all around him, searching the sea with keen and eager eye. Nothing!

And there in the midst of the sea the young man's spirit first envisaged desolation—the desolation of failure irremediable, the desolation of the lover whose love is lost to him, for which there is no comfort. He yearned for the refuge of extinction.

Twenty feet away, a black patch grew in the water, spreading out like floating weed. Hulbert struck furiously towards it, and while he swam the patch lightened and her face rose out of the sea.

She was turned away from him, but her head lay so well back upon the water that he saw the lashes of her closed eyes. A surge of triumph, pride, and confidence swept through his heart, for he knew that, though she was exhausted and all but gone, she was still conscious and had never lost her presence of mind. He felt that he would save her.

She heard the swirl of his strokes, opened her eyes, and saw him. Her eyes closed again. The water was lapping her lips when his hands reached her.

He took her under the arms, turned on his back, and swam gently, holding her before him and marvelling at the abundance of her hair. Presently he felt her hands touch his and knew that she was rested a little. So he guided her hands to his shoulders and betook himself to a steady breast-stroke. The touch of her hands exalted him. He felt that he could swim for ever.

V.

In clear weather very little of what happens on this side of the horizon escapes the eagle eyes of Dunestrand. Without ceasing they read the book of sea and sky, that inexhaustible and ever-changing scroll of wonder.

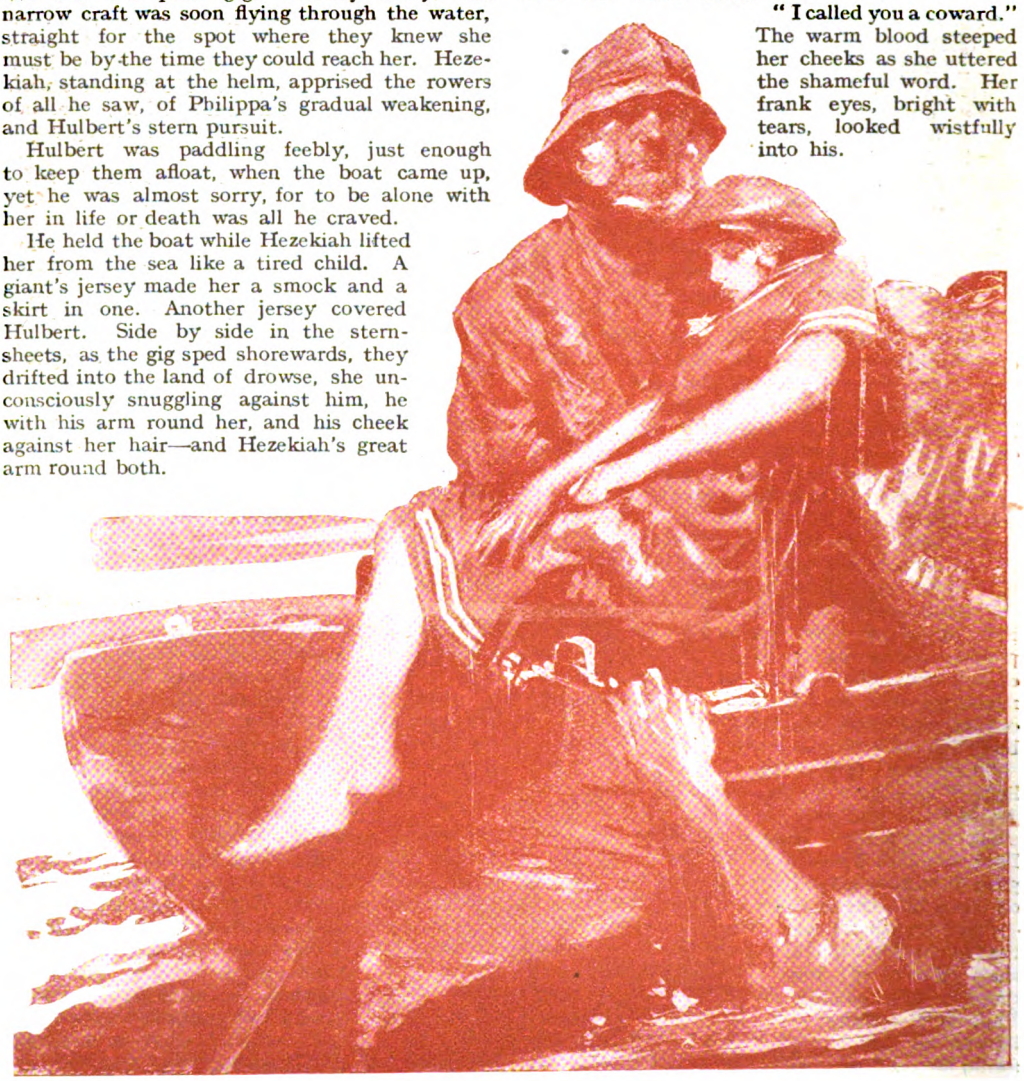
Hezekiah and other salts had seen Philippa run down the beach a mile away and watched

her swimming out, first with admiration, then with anxiety, for they knew almost to a yard how far she could safely go. As she approached the limit of safety, excitement found vent in scolding and exclamations of alarm.

But when the Drift caught her, they hurried down as one man (with no word said) and ran out the old pilot gig. Smartly away, the narrow craft was soon flying through the water, straight for the spot where they knew she must be by the time they could reach her. Hezekiah, standing at the helm, apprised the rowers of all he saw, of Philippa's gradual weakening, and Hulbert's stern pursuit.

Hulbert was paddling feebly, just enough to keep them afloat, when the boat came up, yet he was almost sorry, for to be alone with her in life or death was all he craved.

He held the boat while Hezekiah lifted her from the sea like a tired child. A giant's jersey made her a smock and a skirt in one. Another jersey covered Hulbert. Side by side in the stern-sheets, as the gig sped shorewards, they drifted into the land of drowse, she unconsciously snuggling against him, he with his arm round her, and his cheek against her hair—and Hezekiah's great arm round both.



"HE HELD THE BOAT WHILE HEZEKIAH LIFTED HER FROM THE SEA LIKE A TIRED CHILD."

The Smuggler's Path is open now and will never be closed.

In gratitude for his daughter's life Sir Perceval has dedicated it to the public for ever, whether it falls into the sea or not. If necessary, the tamarisks are to be sacrificed.

Whether it was ever his to dedicate has never been decided. Doubtless the Law knows, but the Law will not tell, except at great expense.

The very efficient fence, decently buried in concrete, is usefully employed in protecting the base of Hoveller's Cliff from the erosive action of the waves to which this part of the coast is seriously exposed.

VI.

THE coastguard's stone on Hoveller's Cliff glowed white in the summer dusk. She faced him and came close.

"I called you a coward." The warm blood steeped her cheeks as she uttered the shameful word. Her frank eyes, bright with tears, looked wistfully into his.

His eyes held worship, and her worshipper would not be her confessor.

"I *am* a coward—Philippa, dear," he said.

She came so near that her bosom almost touched him; her sweet girl-scent was like a waft of Eden. A smile danced in the glistening mirror of her eyes. She turned away her face and bent her cheek the tiniest, tenderest bit closer.

"Be brave, Hulbert!" she whispered.

What Makes a Joke Go

The Experience of Popular Artistes.

MISS LEE WHITE.

IN my opinion, the thing that counts most is the delivery of a joke. That is the great point to study. For instance, a mere movement of the hand or a twitching of the eyebrows may help. It often happens that, getting a joke successfully across the footlights for the first time, one forgets this point, and blames the density of the audience because the joke falls flat. Suddenly you remember how you first delivered it, and try the same method again, to find, in nine cases out of ten, that your joke is a real winner.

I certainly think a subtle joke goes best, but here again an artiste has to be guided by the class and temperament of the audience. Perhaps what I might term the conundrum joke is most generally appreciated, and, although to some it may be a chestnut, this one, the best I think I have told, rarely fails to raise a laugh: "Mose, what is the difference between a bucket of milk in a rain-storm and a conversation between two confidence men?"

"Say, boss, dat nut am too hard to crack; I'se gwine to give it up."

"Well, Mose, one is a thinning scheme and the other is a skinning theme."

MR. HARRY TATE.

If people *expect* to laugh, they *will* laugh, whether a joke is really funny or not. So the moral is: Make them expect to laugh.

New jokes are terribly hard to find, and even when found it is terribly hard to know if they are any use, except by trying them on the audience. So we *do* try them, and they fall desperately flat, and somebody says to somebody else: "Oh, I saw old Funny-Face last night. He *was* bad. Not a bit funny." And somebody says to somebody

else: "I hear Funny-Face has gone off terribly; I wouldn't go to see him if I were you." And that seals the fate of the man who runs a joke factory.

Most jokes are really tragedies. That's why they seem funny. An audience will shriek with laughter at the sight of a man cutting himself, or banging his head, or getting run over by a bus—all tragedies to the man and jokes to the onlookers.

I have generally found, however, that catch-phrases are more successful laughter-raisers than elaborate jokes, and people never seem tired of hearing me repeat, "How's your father?" "What a common man!" "Isn't it annoying, pa-pa?" "I don't think," and my latest, "Thanks. Very much."

It is no use telling a joke, however, to an audience unless you have good lungs. It is necessary for them to know what you are talking about, thus obviating the necessity of somebody in the back row in the circle saying to his or her friend, "What did he say?" A subtle joke is more appreciated at the London Hippodrome than at a place like Sunderland. At the latter town if you get a custard and hit a man in the face with it, they would roar with laughter. In the North or Midlands good domestic jokes are always appreciated, especially if told in their dialect.

MR. ERNIE MAYNE.

The success of a joke depends entirely upon the personality of the person who tells it, and the manner in which it is told. "What a funny-looking little fat man," a flapper was heard to exclaim, after looking at me for a minute or two. Well, I try to be funny. I cannot help being fat, and I have noticed that people seem to laugh most when I make a joke against myself; when I mention, for instance, that it is a wonder to me that I am not an exhibit at some freak establishment, or that my landlord is charging me more rent because of the bulges I have caused in the walls of the house.

I am quite convinced that a London audience, or those down South, are more demonstrative when they see a point. Up North they may see it, but they keep it to themselves, and very often an artiste thinks he is a failure, whereas all the time he is appreciated by the Northerner in his own quiet way.

Suit yourself to conditions generally, and you are safe. Personally speaking, I think I can lay claim to being as popular up North as I am in London. Why? Because I adapt myself to circumstances, and am able to broaden a joke out and tell it in their own dialect. I suppose it sounds funny. Nevertheless, jokes that sound funny to a Londoner fail hopelessly in some Northern towns. Sometimes a subtle joke tickles them, particularly if it is a local or topical one. At the moment of writing, I am appearing at Sunderland and West Hartlepool, two towns which have the reputation of being the toughest on record. And, believe me, there is a great amount of truth in it. Still, these things are sent to try us. Too much plain sailing would make us lazy, so we have to buck up.

MR. LESLIE HENSON.

A stage joke needs a lot of coaxing to make it go every night. There are so many kinds of jokes to be found in a musical comedy. There is first the "situation joke." This is not necessarily funny by itself, but has to do with the action of the plot and the circumstances under which it is said. To make such a joke go you must have the help and co-operation of your colleagues, for if the other actors fail to understand the humour of it, drop their voices on the question to which your pet joke is the answer, the audience, not having heard the question, naturally cannot understand the humour of the answer.

Then there is the lady or gentleman who rattles on with the play as soon as the "wheeze" has been "cracked." However funny the line, the audience, seeing another person's mouth apparently saying something, naturally stifle their mirth to hear something which they hope will be as good, and so bang goes the laugh on that.

Now we come to the "business"—that is, the silent action—joke. This is fairly plain sailing, for an audience will always look where very often they will not listen. So in this case the other actors in a scene have just got to wait for you.

The London audience is the best and most loyal in the world. Given a company of cheery souls, however, who are out to make the play a big success, which they mean to enjoy as well as the audience, a comedian need have no difficulties.

MR. GUS ELEN.

What astonishes me is the number of poor jokes that go, while really clever ones do not raise a smile. A joke, gag, or song, however, that creates a furore when first tried, will some-

times, although rendered in the same way later, fall off considerably, owing to the change of taste in the audience or the conditions of the moment. Each type of audience must be studied carefully, and in my own case my jokes, which are in my songs, are rendered quite differently to an East-end audience to what they are when I am appearing in the West-end.

The success of a joke depends entirely on the mood of an audience, the sort of joke they are expecting and are on the look-out for from the jokist. The subtle joke, if really funny, is greatly appreciated; so is the topical, if well placed. The broad joke is liked by a certain section of the audience only. My most successful joke was when I received my salary in full for non-appearance.

MR. JACK PLEASANTS.

A good deal depends on the delivery of a joke. Sometimes after the joke is fired it needs a little look from the performer, or maybe a slight gesture, or both, to make it "go." That applies more to the subtle joke. The obvious one, of course, does not need much by-play.

Then, again, in some cases it isn't so much what one says as how one says it! It may be a very simple thing, but as it suits—or fits—the personality of the performer, it "goes."

Audiences vary a little, of course, but personally I do not find any difference in appreciation, or "seeing the jokes," in London or the provinces. Certainly, I have had the experience—as all other comedians have—of finding a joke which has been a hit at place after place, suddenly miss fire at some hall (it may be London or the provinces), and have wondered why, but could find no solution.

Sometimes the audience gets a good joke in. I remember some years ago going to a hall in Scotland. The first line of my opening song was, "I went up to London a few weeks ago," when a small, thin voice came from the gallery, "It's a pity you didn't stop there."

Some joke and some laugh, believe me.

MR. STANLEY LUPINO.

To say what really makes a joke go is not easy, even to a man who earns his living telling them. There are so many kinds of jokers. There is the man who reels off a long string of funny tales; there is the topical joker who makes his jokes out of the happenings of the moment. There is the character comedian who fits his jokes round the particular character he is portraying; the domestic comedian who gets humour out of the everyday life of the man in the street, and the burlesque comedian who broadens out his comedy, really making a living caricature of the personality he is playing.

Again, all audiences differ. Every theatre has its different patrons, and they each want a different type of humour. They are the buyers, we are the salesmen, and they will not buy what they do not want. This explains why many music-hall acts do not go as well in one town as they do in another. Some of our greatest London comedians have not been accepted by the provinces, and *vice versa*.

I think the most successful comedian is the one who makes his jokes keep pace with the times. That is to say, the comedian who makes his jokes fit in with the topic of the hour. To make a joke go, however, you must have a good delivery. There is the gallery and circle to please, as well as the stalls, and they have all paid to hear you. Again, it is not necessary to ram a joke down the throats of the audience. They have intelligence as well as you. Give them the joke, let them think it out for themselves. If they like it they will say so; if not, get on with the next, quick.

A comedian must be an actor first and a comedian after. That is to say, he must be able to act his joke, not say it like a parrot. The old saying in the profession is, when in doubt fall over. That is rather a hard way of putting it, because an audience will not always laugh if you fall over. If, however, you can show a good reason for falling over, and you can do it well, the whole house will laugh, because it is something they can all see and don't have to strain their ears to catch.

A happy smile goes a long way, and the most successful joker is the man who makes the people think he is enjoying it as much as they.

MR. BRANSBY WILLIAMS.

There are various kinds of successful "gags"—the spontaneous, clever, and funny remark of the moment, or the clever repartee, at an interruption or happening in the audience, for instance. I am supposed to be rather famous for these, as I have seldom been at a loss. In fact I have scored so many times that the audiences used to think it was an arranged part of my performance.

I have been most noted for my up-to-date topical remarks. A London paper a few weeks ago, noticing my latest show, "John Bull's Music-Hall," said: "One knew Bransby Williams had read and absorbed the *very* evening's newspapers, as his gags came to two-thirds of the audience as too premature."

These topical gags sometimes get a roar of applause and laughter for a couple of days, and pall in three or four. Yet there are comedians in so-called "revues" doing old "gags" of coupons and queues.

You can hear the same "gags" trotted out by scores of comedians. Some of them use them so long that they believe they really belong to them. Yet that same poor "gag" was stolen from another by their forefathers. Poor "gag"! It sometimes has long, Rip Van Winkle whiskers, and some revue-writer shaves it and gives it a "hair-cut" and trots it out again. At pantomime time all the poor things are turned out of all the property-baskets and shelves of memory. These can be bought in "gag" books—hence the "sameness" of the music-hall comedian and revue comedian.

Subtle "gags" are mostly a failure. You find yourself and one or two interested, and the others thinking! Broad and blue jokes I have no room for, although sometimes in a spontaneous "gag" a double meaning is innocently given and seen.

I think the South of England, except towns like Brighton, are the densest for "gags." Up North a clever "gag" goes best. An actor who can act a "gag," however, is the most successful. Some men only collect "gags" and recite them, and then wonder why they fall flat. Personality is the main thing.

MR. GEORGE MOZART.

My idea of making a joke, whether spoken or acted, go, is never to dwell upon a single point sufficiently long to let the humour exhaust itself. Thus, before the audience has quite done laugning at one of my "thumbnail impersonations," as I term them, I have begun to set them laughing at something else. There is no need to invent jokes. You can find one in every street—in the little tricks of walk, speech, and action that go to make up an individual. And it is the parodies on personalities that make an audience laugh. They love to see the peculiarities of others copied, forgetting at times that theirs would be just as funny if caricatured.

Some people's idea of humour, however, is very quaint. On one occasion I was appearing at the Palladium when Lewis Waller was also in the bill with his Julius Cæsar sketch. I received a letter containing the following:—

"I would suggest, as an excellent bit of business for Waller's 'Julius Cæsar' sketch, that when Waller turns to his crowd of Roman rioters and exclaims, 'Oh, lend me thine ear,' or something of that sort, a number of the crowd should be made to pull off artificial ears and hold them out to him.

"I believe this would create a roar in the house, and my friends think so too. Can't you tell Waller this?"

I did, and left him gasping.

MR. GEORGE GRAVES.

The most successful joke or "gag" is undoubtedly the apt remark, funnily fired at the right moment. It is designed to deceive the audience into believing that every word the artiste utters is a sparkling spontaneity of his thought on the spot. The real trouble is that "gagging" is a great strain. It takes much laughter from one's own life to manufacture laughs for other people! Consequently, the gentle art of gagging is by no means a mere hobby—rather is it a disease, a mania.

There are no new jokes; but there are fresh ways of serving them up. If, for instance, instead of saying a man is "in the soup," you proclaim that he is "up to his ankles in the consommé," it may tickle your West-end audience. Again, if, instead of telling the man with scanty locks to "keep your hair on," you advise him to put a fence round his solitary hairs, other people may be amused, if he is not.

Here is a gag that, with all modesty, I can assure you was a genuine impromptu. One evening, while playing in "The Belle of Brittany," I was in the middle of singing a song when a noisy and very showily-dressed party of six rudely

pushed their way into the stalls, chattering loudly about their seats, and upsetting everyone. A sudden inspiration caused me to stop singing, look at the brilliantly-garbed, badly-behaved late comers, then turn to someone on the stage and say: "The Tooting express has just arrived, then?" I must confess, however, that the noisy party did not seem to enjoy the gag.

Most successful jokes, however, have to be built up. The capacity for constructive humour is necessary, and each new sketch, play, or pantomime calls for fresh effort. Personally, I believe in the subtle joke. The broad joke may be appreciated by some, but I think the subtle, whimsical, droll "twist" to a character or incident is more likely to make a hit.

MISS MARIE LLOYD.

The joke that goes is the joke contained in a witty, tuneful song. There must be some sparkle in it. That is why I am so particular in my choice of songs. I have spent as much as five hundred pounds a year on songs, only to find probably three or four which I could include in my repertoire. Dear old Dan Leno was the best judge of a joke and its effect on the audience that I ever knew. "Don't tell or sing them something they have got to think about," he would say. "Give them something that will hit them at once." That is my idea.

The simple and obvious is the best joke. In cold print the lines :—

"When once I ate an apple the whole universe was stirred;
Now girls can eat bananas and no one says a word,"

do not, perhaps, seem particularly humorous, yet when I have sung them in my song on Mother Eve they have raised the heartiest of laughs. But jokes and songs depend entirely on delivery for success.

MR. W. H. BERRY.

It is a peculiar thing that hosts of suggestions for gags have reached me from audiences. Yet, when I have tried some of them now and again they have not been appreciated. Which would seem to point to the fact that an audience does not always know its own taste in jokes. Humour, however, is a very peculiar thing, and an artiste must, of necessity, keep on changing and cultivating his jokes until he strikes the right notes. We are just in the same position as the editor of a humorous paper. Like the comedian, he must keep on "ringing the changes" if he is to hold and entertain his public.

I have cracked so many jokes that it is not easy to choose any particular one as an example of the most successful. Perhaps, however, my "gag" in "Tina," at the Adelphi, was one of the most appreciated, when as Van Dan, the cocoa king, I said, speaking of my daughter's possible marriage with a duke :—

"That's all right—we'll reverse things! Duke marries into the beverage."

MR. WILKIE BARD.

To my mind the more obvious and simple the joke the better. I have a great faith in impromptu humour, or what seems impromptu. I am always looking for openings for gags, but spontaneity in gagging does not always occur. Most gags have to be thought out carefully beforehand.

The alleged spontaneous gag is frequently constructed with the breakfast egg, or the kipper, as the case may be. It depends upon the money an artiste is making whether he has an egg or a kipper for breakfast. I remember some time ago playing in a pantomime when a certain small-part lady was employed to laugh the moment a certain comedian delivered a gag and thus set the house a-giggling. On one occasion she forgot to laugh and the joke went flat. She was sacked. This was forced gagging, I'll admit, but none the less it was gagging so-called.

Someone has said that the public prefer gagging to singing; but I should doubt this. Much depends upon the nature of the gag. If the gag is witty, well and good; if it is dull and chestnutty, it is better left unsaid. Stock phrases must be irksome to audiences.

The best medicine in the world is good, honest,

hearty laughter, and to command that tribute from your audience, you must appeal in a good, honest, and hearty manner to their sense of humour. But humour, like everything else that is engrained in our nature, is of the most elusive quality. You may read a song or a joke, and think it is very clever and humorous, and yet find it does not appeal successfully to the audience. On the other hand, the simplest song in my repertoire, "O, O, Capital O," was one of my greatest successes. The humour of this lay in the absurdity of asking the audience to take it seriously, just as in the case of Lear's limericks.

MR. GEORGE ROBEY.

Everything depends on the way a joke is delivered. The fact is, no one can learn how to make others laugh. It is an inborn gift, though, of course, it requires cultivation; but if you haven't the gift it is not much use trying to acquire it.

Like most comedians, I have no end of offers (for cash) of all sorts of ideas for jokes and funny songs, but the fact is the great majority of people have no idea of the sort of joke that is likely to go well with a theatrical audience. Most of the jokes I am offered are too deep, and want explaining, and I need hardly say that a joke of this sort is no use at all to a comedian.

A catch-phrase is often the best kind of joke. For instance, in pantomime, in Liverpool, a few years ago, I happened to hit on a gag that became very popular. "So that's it—t'is it?" Repeat it, and you'll see what I mean. By the end of the pantomime it was quite a catch-phrase all over the town.

Curiously enough, a week after the pantomime finished Mr. Fred Terry appeared at the same theatre in "The Scarlet Pimpernel." In one important scene he had to walk to a door, turn round and say, gravely, "So *that's* it, is it?" On his opening night he played the scene as usual, walked to the door and remarked, "So that's it, is it?" And I don't believe he knows to this day why the audience gave a positive yell, and laughed for nearly five minutes.

MR. ALFRED LESTER.

In my case a sad face makes a joke go. I can't afford to enjoy a joke. I daren't risk a laugh in public. My greatest sorrow is that people seem to think I'm a big joke and insist on calling me a comedian. The more melancholy I am, the more they seem to laugh. They never seem tired of hearing me talk about blighted love, funerals, and insurance money.

There's no doubt that London and the South appreciate a joke the most, although the big towns of the Midlands come a good second. A subtle joke goes best with a select audience, and good, clean, domestic humour with the majority. It is seldom one can foretell if a joke is going to get a big laugh until it is tried on the audience, and the impromptu one—in other words, gag—is very often better than the carefully-thought-out one. And, talking of gagging, the art of this is to know when to stop.

Arthur Roberts has been the finest "gagster" we have ever had, and it was very seldom he made a joke that didn't fit the scene. This is where so many would-be comedians fail. They imagine because they think of a gag, it can go in any scene or any play.

Situation is the most important thing towards the success of a joke. A gag that is palpably dragged in seldom scores, and very often the simplest form of humour is the most effective. For instance, the biggest laugh I had in "The Arcadians" was the line, "Who owes him the threepence?" spoken at the end of another actor's dramatic speech—showing it was the situation that was responsible for the gag getting the laugh.

MR. FRED ALLANDALE.

I am of opinion that circumstances make a joke go. It is useless for a delineator of inebriated characters to appear at a Band of Hope concert, or for a gentleman who juggles talk with the assistance of a block of ice to perform at a Deaf and Dumb Asylum.

If you hear a Lancashire comedian tell an

"Eh, by Goom" story in Lancashire, and again in London, you will be led to wonder where the artiste has lost his art. He hasn't—only lost his "circumstances." Printing will make *that* joke go!

If a Scotsman, with his foot on his native heath, tells a mean story of his race, he won't get the laugh he is certain to get if he tells it down South, the circumstances here being that we all enjoy a joke at the "other fellow's" expense. An instance of this is the joke concerning which town possesses the bravest man, Liverpool or Manchester. A native of each place agreed to fight in a dark room. Nothing happening for five minutes after they were locked in, the door was opened, the lights put on, and the Liverpool man had disappeared, eventually being found up the chimney. Of course this story told in Manchester will always go well. After you have told it, conclude by saying: "When I tell this story in Liverpool I put the Manchester man up the chimney."

In the Ventriloquist scene I have with George Robey in "Joy Bells," the following occurs:—

F. A.—If you don't go out at once I'll fetch an attendant and put you out.

G. R. (rolling up his sleeves)—Oh! So you're going to start the rough stuff, are you?

F. A.—Yes! And if that's the attitude you're going to adopt I'll fetch *two* attendants.

G. R.—You fetch two attendants and I'll give you a couple of whacks.

That this last line brought a big round of applause was due to the circumstance that a couple of W.A.A.C.'s were seated by his side.

It may be suggested that the applause was due to a ready wit, but a ready-witted remark of thrice the calibre without the attendant circumstances would not have got one quarter the recognition.

Naturally one adapts oneself to one's audience, and the ability to do so places artistes in their various spheres. To get well home in the North, my own experience is that you must give dialogue with a punch in every line. Up there they work hard, play hard, and teach you to be brief and to the point. In the South the circumstances of work and play differ, and a joke may be elaborately led up to, but in the North they want a good meal and "no trimmings."

MR. T. E. DUNVILLE.

If a joke contains a joke, I find it appreciated much the same whether playing North or South. Northern audiences are a trifle more critical, but just as quick as audiences South (and perhaps a little more so).

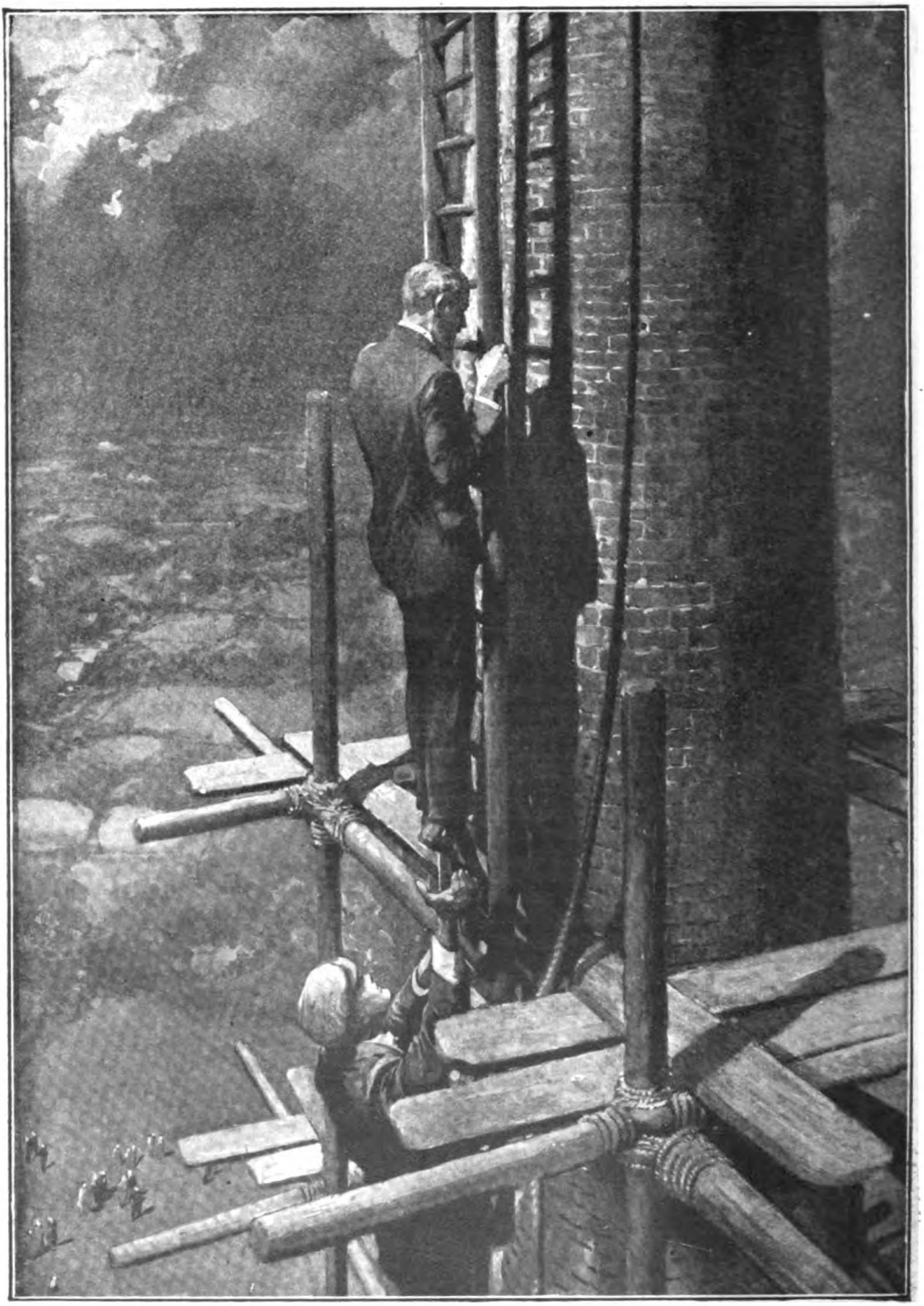
Telling jokes depends a good deal upon the place they are told in. For instance, one can make a great laughing success in one hall, and find himself almost a failure in another hall only a stone's throw away. This is accounted for probably by the second building being too large for the single-handed entertainer.

Audiences, of course, vary, and this calls to mind a certain well-known comedian, who played at a house supposed to be very hard to please. After he had done his turn and made the audience rock with laughter, he walked up to the manager, saying:—

"I was told your audiences were absolutely rotten. Why, they yelled at my jokes."

"Ah," replied the manager, "that was not your fault. There was a comedian here two weeks ago telling the same jokes, and they've just tumbled to them."

Photos of George Robey, George Mozart, Alfred Lester, Stanley Lupino, George Graves, Leslie Henson, and Miss Marie Lloyd by Foulsham and Banfield; Gus Elen, Jack Pleasants, and Bransby Williams by Hana; T. E. Dunville by Bassano; Wilkie Bard by Protheroe; Harry Tate by Claude Harris; Fred Allandale by J. P. Bamber; W. H. Berry and Miss Lee White by Arbuthnot; and Ernie Mayne by Dobsons.



"THEN BEGAN THE DESCENT. 'LOOK AT THE BRICKWORK THE WHOLE TIME, SEYMOUR—AND HOLD FAST WITH YOUR HANDS. NOW GIVE ME YOUR RIGHT FOOT, DO YOU HEAR?'"

(*See page* 280.)

The Real Test

by "Sapper"

Illustrated by Christopher Clark R.I.

I.

"IT depends entirely," remarked the Great Doctor, twirling an empty wine-glass in his long, sensitive fingers, "what you mean by fear. The common interpretation of the word—the method which I think you would use to portray it on the stage"—he turned to the Celebrated Actor, who was helping himself to a cigarette from a silver box on the table in front of him—"would show a nervous shrinking from doing a thing: a positive distaste to it—a probable refusal, finally, to carry out the action. And rightly or wrongly—but very naturally—that emotion is the object of universal scorn. But——" and the Great Doctor paused thoughtfully—"is there no more in fear than that?"

The Well-known Soldier drained his port. "It would be a platitude to remark," he said, "that the successful overcoming of fear is the highest form of bravery."

"That if, for instance, our young friend had overcome his fear this afternoon," said the Rising Barrister, "and had jumped in after that horrible little dog, it would have been an act of the highest bravery."

"Or the most stupid bravado," supplemented the Celebrated Actor.

"Precisely my point," exclaimed the Great Doctor. "What is the dividing line between bravado and bravery?"

The Well-known Soldier looked thoughtful. "The man," he said at length, "who exposes himself to being killed or wounded when there is no necessity, with probably—at the bottom of his mind—a desire to show off, is guilty of culpable bravado. The man who, when his battalion is faltering, exposes himself to certain death to hold them is brave."

"Two extreme cases," answered the Doctor. "Narrow it down, General. What is the dividing line?"

"I suppose," murmured the Soldier, "when the results justify the sacrifice. No man has a right to throw his life away uselessly."

"In those circumstances," said the Rising Barrister, "there can be no fixed dividing line. Every man must decide for himself; and what is bravery in you, might be bravado in me."

The Doctor nodded. "Undoubtedly," he agreed. "And with a thoughtful man that decision may be very difficult. For the fraction of a second he will hesitate—weigh up the pros and cons; and even if he decides to do it finally, it may then be too late."

"Only a fool would have gone in after that dog," said the Actor, dogmatically.

"Women love fools," answered the Barrister, *à propos* of nothing in particular; and the Celebrated Actor snorted contemptuously.

"Which is why the man who is reputed to know no fear is so universally popular," said the Soldier. "If such a man exists, he is most certainly a fool."

The door opened and their hostess put her head into the room. "You men have got to come and dance," she cried. "There's no good looking at one another and hoping for bridge: you can have that afterwards."

The strains of a gramophone came faintly from the drawing-room as they rose dutifully.

"I cannot perpetrate these new atrocities, dear lady," remarked the Soldier, "but if anybody would like to have a barn dance, I shall be happy to do my best."

"Sybil shall take you in hand, Sir John," she answered, leading the way across the hall. "By the way, young Captain Seymour, the V.C. flying-man, has come up. Such a nice boy—so modest and unassuming."

As they entered the room a fresh one-step had just started, and for a while they stood watching. The two sons of the house, just home from Eton, were performing vigorously with two pretty girls from a neighbouring place; while Sybil, their sister, who was to take the General in hand, floated past in the arms of a keen-eyed, bronzed young man who had won the V.C. for a flying exploit that read like a fairy-tale. The

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other two couples were girls dancing together; while, seated on a sofa, knitting placidly, were two elderly ladies.

"And where, Lady Vera," murmured the Actor to his hostess, "is our young friend Peter?"

She frowned almost imperceptibly and looked away. "He disappeared after he left the dining-room," she remarked, shortly. "I suppose, in view of what occurred this afternoon, he prefers to be by himself."

The Actor ran a delicate hand through his magnificent grey hair—it was a gesture for which he was famous—and regarded his hostess in surprise. "Even you, Lady Vera!" he remarked, pensively. "I can understand these young girls blaming the boy; but for you—a woman of sense——" He shrugged his shoulders—another world-famed movement, feebly imitated by lesser lights.

"I don't think we will discuss the matter, Mr. Deering," she said, turning away a little abruptly.

It had been a somewhat unpleasant incident at the time, and the unpleasantness was still apparently far from over. Madge Saunderson, one of the girls stopping in the house, had been the owner of a small dog of rat-like appearance and propensities, to which she had been devoted. She shared this devotion with no one, the animal being of the type that secretes itself under chairs and nips the ankle of the next person who unsuspectingly sits down. However, *De mortuis*. . . . And since its violent death that afternoon, Toots—which was the animal's name—had been invested with a halo. Its atrocious habits were forgotten: it lived in everyone's memory as poor little Toots.

It was over its death that Peter Benton had made himself unpopular. Not far from the house there was a disused mill, past which, at certain times of the year, the water poured in a black, evil-looking torrent, emerging below into a deep pond cupped out in the rocks. For a hundred yards before the stream came to the old mill-wheel the slope of the ground affected it to such an extent that, if much rain had fallen in the hills above, the current was dangerous. The water swirled along, its smoothness broken only by an occasional eddy, till with ever-increasing speed it dropped sheer into the pond, twenty feet below. Occasionally battered things were found floating in that pond—stray animals which had got caught in the stream above; and twice since the mill had closed down twenty years ago a child had been discovered, bruised and dead, in the placid pool below the wheel. But, then, these had been small animals and children—quite unable to keep their feet. Whereas Peter Benton was a man, and tall at that.

Into this stream, flooded more than usual with the recent rain, had fallen poor little Toots. Being completely blind in both eyes, it had serenely waddled over the edge of the small hand-bridge which spanned the water, and had departed, struggling feebly, towards the mill-wheel seventy yards away. At the moment of the catastrophe Peter Benton and Madge Saunderson were standing on the bridge, and her scream of horror rang out simultaneously with the splash.

The man, seeing in an instant what had happened, raced along the bank, and overtook the dog when it had gone about half-way, at a point where the current quickened and seemed to leap ahead. And then had occurred the dreadful thing.

According to the girl, afterwards, he just stood there and watched Toots dashed to pieces. According to the man—but, incidentally, he said nothing, which proved his cowardice, as the girl remarked. He had nothing to say. Instead of going into the water and seizing the dog, he had stood on the bank and let it drown. And he had no excuse. Of course, there would have been a certain element of risk; but no man who was a man would have thought of that. Not with poor little Toots drowning before his eyes.

And his remark at the moment when she had rushed up to him, almost hysterical with grief, showed him to be—well, perhaps it would be as well not to say what she thought. Madge Saunderson had paused in her narrative at tea and consumed a sugar cake.

"What *did* he say, Madge?" asked Sybil Lethbridge.

"He said," remarked Miss Saunderson, "'Sorry. No bon, as they say. It really wasn't worth it—not for Toots.' Can you beat it?" she stormed. "'Not for Toots'! Poor little heart—drowning before that brute's eyes."

"Of course," said Sybil, thoughtfully, "the mill-stream is very dangerous."

"My dear Sybil," answered Madge Saunderson, coldly, "if you're going to take that point of view I have nothing more to say. But I'd like to know what you'd have said if it had been Ruffles."

The terrier in question regarded the speaker with an expectant eye, in which thoughts of cake shone brightly.

"What happened then?" asked one of the audience.

"We walked in silence down to the pool below," continued Madge. "And there—we found him—my little Toots. He floated to the side, and Mr. Benton was actually daring enough to stoop down and pull him out of the water. It was then that he added insult to injury," she went on, in a voice of suppressed fury. "'Rotten luck, Miss Saunderson,' he said; 'but in a way it's rather a happy release for the poor little brute, isn't it? I'm afraid only your kind heart prevented him being put away years ago.'"

A silence had settled on the room, a silence which was broken at length by Sybil.

"He *was* very old, wasn't he?" she murmured.

Madge Saunderson's eyes flashed ominously. "Eighteen," she said. "And I quite fail to see that that's any excuse. You wouldn't let an old man of ninety drown, would you—just because he was old? And Toots was quite as human as any old man, and far less trouble."

Such had been the official *communiqué*, issued to a feminine gathering at tea-time; in due course it travelled to the rest of the house-party. And, as is the way with such stories, it had not lost in the telling.

Daisy Johnson, for instance, had retailed it with some gusto to the Rising Barrister.

"What a pity about Mr. Benton, isn't it?" she had murmured before dinner,

"INSTEAD OF GOING INTO THE WATER AND SEIZING THE DOG, HE HAD STOOD ON THE BANK AND LET IT DROWN."

moving a little so that the pink light from a lamp fell on her face. Pink, she reflected, was undoubtedly the colour she would have for all the shades when she had a house.

The Rising Barrister regarded her casually. "What is a pity?" he asked.

"Haven't you heard?" she cried. "Why, this afternoon poor little Toots—Madge Saunderson's dog—fell into the mill-stream."

"Thank God!" ejaculated the Barrister, brutally.

"Oh, I know he wasn't an attractive dog!" she said.

"Attractive!" he interrupted. "Why, the little beast's snorts reverberated through the house!"

"But still," she continued, firmly, "I don't think Mr. Benton should have let it drown before his eyes without raising a finger to save it. He stood stock-still on the bank—hesitating; and then it was too late. Of course, I suppose it was a little dangerous." She shrugged a delightful pair of shoulders gracefully. "I don't think most men would have hesitated." She glanced at the Rising Barrister as she spoke, and if he failed to alter the "most men" to his own advantage the fault was certainly not hers. It struck him suddenly that pink gave a most attractive lighting effect.

"Er—perhaps not," he murmured. "Still, I expect he was quite right, you know. One—er—should be very careful what one says in cases of this sort."

Which was why a few minutes later he retailed the story to the Celebrated Actor, over a sherry-and-bitters.

"The faintest tinge of the yellow streak," he said, confidentially. "There was something or other in France—I don't exactly recall it at this moment. I know I heard something."

But the Celebrated Actor flatly refused to agree. "I don't know anything about France," he said, firmly. "I know a lot about that dog. If a suitable occasion arises, I shall publicly propose a vote of thanks to young Benton. Would you believe me, sir, only yesterday, when outlining my part in my new play to Lady Vera and one or two others, the little brute bit me in the ankle! True, I had inadvertently trodden on it, but——" He waved a careless hand, as if dismissing such a trifling cause.

From all of which it will be seen what the general feeling in the house was towards Peter Benton on the night in question. And Peter, a very discerning young man, was not slow to realize it. At first it had amused him; after a while he had become annoyed. More or less a stranger in the locality, he had not known the depth of the mill-stream; and he frankly admitted to himself that he had hesitated to go into that black, swirling water, not a stone's throw from the mill itself, in order to save a dog. He had hesitated, and in a second it had been too late. The dog had flashed past him, and he had watched it disappear over the fall by the wheel. It was only later that to him the additional reason of the dog's extreme age and general ill-health presented itself. And the additional reason had not added to his popularity with the animal's mistress.

He quite saw her point of view: he was annoyed because no one apparently saw his. And he was far too proud to attempt any explanation—apart from seeing the futility of it. He could imagine the cold answer—"Doubtless you were perfectly right. Poor little Toots is dead now. Shall we consider the incident closed?"

Savagely he kicked the turf on the lawn outside the window where they were dancing. For three in succession Sybil had had Captain Seymour as her partner, and Peter had hoped——

"Oh, hang that horrible little dog!" he muttered to himself, striding viciously away into the garden.

A brilliant moon was shining, flooding the country with a cold white light, in which things stood out almost as clearly as by day. Half a mile away an unfinished factory chimney, still with its scaffolding round it, rose sheer and black against the sky. Around it new works were being erected, and for a while Peter stood motionless, gazing at the thin column of bricks and mortar.

Only that morning he had watched men at work on it, with almost a shudder. They looked like so many flies crawling over the flimsy boards, and he had waited while one workman had peered nonchalantly over the edge of his plank and indulged in a wordy warfare with the man below. It seemed that unless the latter mended his ways he would shortly receive a brick on his blinking nut; but it was the complete disregard for their dizzy height that had fascinated Peter. He could imagine few professions which he would less sooner join than that of steeplejack. And yet the funny thing was that on the occasions when he had flown he had not noticed any discomfort at all.

Presumably there was some scientific reason for it—something which would account for the fact that, though he could fly at twenty times the height of St. Paul's without feeling giddy, on the occasion when he had looked over the edge of that great dome from the little platform at the top he had been overcome with a sort of dreadful nausea, and had had to go back quickly.

"Why, Peter, what are you doing here all alone?" A voice behind him made him look round.

For a moment the dog episode had gone out of his mind, and, with a quick smile, he took a step towards the speaker. "Why, Sybil," he said, "how topping you look! Isn't it a glorious night?" And then suddenly he remembered, and stopped with a frown.

"Peter," said the girl, quietly, "I want to hear about this afternoon from you, please."

"Haven't you heard all there is to be heard?" he answered, a little bitterly. "Miss Saunderson's dog fell into the mill-stream. I failed to pull it out: to be strictly accurate, I failed to attempt to pull it out. That's all there is to it."

They faced one another in the moonlight, and after a while the girl spoke again. "That's not like you, Peter. Why did you let it drown?"

"Because," said the man, deliberately, "I did not consider I was called on to risk my life to save a dog. Even poor little Toots," he added, cynically.

"Supposing it had been a child, Peter?" said the girl, gravely.

"My God!" answered the man, very low. "As bad as that, is it? Oh, my God!"

"They're saying things, Peter: all these people are saying things."

The man thrust his hands into his pockets, and stared with brooding eyes at the black, lifeless chimney.

"Saying I'm a coward, are they?" He forced the words out. "What do you think, Sybil?"

The girl bit her lip, and suddenly put her hand on his arm. "Oh! Peter," she whispered. "it wasn't like you—not a bit!"

"You think," he said dispassionately, "that I should have been justified—more, that I ought to have jumped into the mill-stream in flood to save that dog?"

But the girl made no answer: she only looked miserably at the man's averted face.

"I don't know," she said at length. "I don't know. It's so—so difficult to know what to say."

Gently Peter Benton removed her hand from his arm. "That is quite a good enough answer for me, Sybil." He faced her gravely. "The thing is unfortunate, because I was going to ask you—to-night——" His jaw set and he turned away for a moment. Then he faced her again. "But never mind that now: the situation, as they say in Parliament, does not arise. I would like you, however, to know that I do not think about the matter at all. For one

"'SAYING I'M A COWARD, ARE THEY?' HE FORCED THE WORDS OUT. 'WHAT DO YOU THINK, SYBIL?'"

brief second this afternoon I did think about it; for the fraction of a minute I had made up my mind to go in after the dog. And then I realized how utterly unjustifiable such an action would be. Since that moment—as I say—I have not thought about the matter at all."

"And supposing it had been Ruffles?" asked the girl, slowly.

For a while the man hesitated. Then: "My decision would have been the same," he answered, turning on his heel.

II.

INSIDE the house the Celebrated Actor and the Rising Barrister were each proving to their own satisfaction, if not to their partners', that the modern dance held no terrors for them. The two boys were getting warmer and more energetic; Lady Vera, after chatting for a little with the Great Doctor and the Well-known Soldier, had left them to their own devices, and had joined the two elderly ladies on the sofa.

In a corner of the room sat Captain Seymour talking to Madge Saunderson, though, incidentally, she was doing most of the talking; and with them sat the two other girls. Every now and then Seymour frowned uncertainly, and shook his head: the invariable signal for all three girls to lean forward in their most beseeching manner and look adoringly up into his face.

"I wonder," remarked the Doctor, after watching the quartette for a while, "what mischief those girls are plotting?"

The Soldier adjusted his eyeglass and looked across the room. "Probably asking for his autograph," he answered, cynically. "What I want to know is where my teacher has gone to—Miss Sybil."

"I saw her go out into the garden some time ago," said the Doctor. "By Gad, but I'm sorry about this afternoon!"

The Soldier pulled at his cigar. "I am not

well versed in the family history," he murmured, "and the connection is a trifle obscure."

"That confounded dog!" answered the Doctor. "Those two are head over heels in love with one another."

"And you think——?"

"My dear fellow," said the Doctor, "Sybil is one of the dearest girls in the country. I brought her into the world; in many ways she is like my own daughter. But—she is a girl. And if I know anything about the sex, she'd find it easier to forgive him if he'd stolen."

A peal of laughter from the quartette opposite made both men look up. Seymour was nodding his head resignedly, and Madge Saunderson was clapping her hands together with glee.

"Don't forget," her voice came clearly across the room, "we'll pretend it's a bet."

It was at that moment that Sybil appeared in the window, and the Soldier let his eyes dwell on the girl approvingly.

"What a thoroughbred!" he said at length, turning to the Doctor. "I'm not certain it isn't better—as it is."

"Hang it, man!" said the Doctor, irritably. "The boy is a thoroughbred, too. What did you say yourself after dinner about the results having to justify the sacrifice?"

But the Soldier only grunted non-committally. It would doubtless be an excellent thing if theory and practice never clashed.

Sybil came slowly into the room, and Madge Saunderson rose with a meaning glance at Captain Seymour.

"Syb," she cried, "we've got the finest bet on you've ever thought of! I've betted Captain Seymour six pairs of gloves that he doesn't climb up Mill Down chimney in the moonlight, and he's betted me five hundred of his most special cigarettes that he does."

For a moment a silence settled on the room, which was broken by Lady Vera. "But are you quite sure it's safe, my dear?" she remarked, searching for a dropped stitch. "It might fall down or something."

Miss Saunderson laughed merrily. "Why, Aunt Vera," she cried, "there are men working on it every day. It's quite safe—only I bet he'll have cold feet, and not get to the top—V.C. and all." She flashed a smile at the flying-man. "And it's a ripping evening for a walk."

The Doctor turned to his companion. "I wonder what that young woman's game is?" he remarked, thoughtfully.

"I don't know," answered the Soldier. "I suppose you've got a good head for heights, Seymour?" he called out.

"Pretty fair, sir," replied the airman, with a grin. "I don't mind twenty thousand feet, so I don't think Mill Down chimney should worry me much."

"The two things are not quite alike," said a quiet voice from the window, and everyone turned to see Peter Benton standing there, with his hands in his pockets. "I've got a shocking head for height myself, but I never noticed it when I was flying."

"I think I will chance it," answered Seymour, with a slight drawl, and having recently been supplied with Madge Saunderson's version of the dog incident his tone was understandable.

"Let's all go down and see he doesn't cheat," cried one of the girls, and there was a general exodus of the younger members of the party for wraps. Only Sybil, with troubled eyes, stood motionless, staring out into the brilliant moonlight; while Peter, lighting a cigarette, picked up an illustrated paper and glanced through it. And to the Doctor, watching the scene with his shrewd grey eyes, the only person in the room who seemed ill at ease was the flying-man himself.

"What would the world be like," he remarked to the Soldier, "if woman lost her power to cause man to make a fool of himself?"

"Good Lord! my dear fellow," said the other, "it's only an after-dinner prank. That boy will do it on his head."

"I dare say he will," returned the Doctor. "But it's cheap, and he knows it." He rose. "Shall we go down and witness the feat?"

"Why not?" answered the Soldier. "It may stop Deering telling us again about his new play."

Half an hour later the whole house-party were grouped round the base of the chimney. Close to, it seemed to have grown in height, till it towered above them into the starlit sky. The girls were chattering gaily, standing around Seymour—except for Sybil, who stood a little apart; while the two Eton boys were busily engaged in deciding on the correct method of ascent. Seated on a pile of bricks sat the four men, more occupied with a never-ending political argument than the performance of climbing the chimney; while in the background, standing by himself, was Peter Benton, with a twisted, bitter smile on his face.

He was under no delusions as to why the bet had been made: just a further episode, thought out by a spiteful girl, to show his conduct that afternoon in a blacker light. On the surface, at any rate, it was more dangerous to the ordinary man to climb this chimney than to go into the mill-stream. And this was being done merely for sport—as a prank; while the other might have saved a dog's life.

With a laugh, Seymour swung himself off the ground, and started to climb. He went up swiftly, without faltering; and after a while even the political discussion ceased, and the party below stared upwards in silence. In the cold white light the climber looked like some gigantic insect, creeping up the brickwork, and gradually as he neared the top the spectators moved farther away from the base of the chimney, in order to see him better. At length he reached the limit of the main scaffolding; only some temporary makeshift work continued for the few feet that separated him from the actual top. He hesitated for a moment, apparently reconnoitring the best route; and Madge Saunderson, cupping her mouth in her hands, shouted up to him:—

"Right up, Captain Seymour, or you won't get your cigarettes."

"SYBIL CAME SLOWLY INTO THE ROOM, AND MADGE CRIED, 'SYB, WE'VE GOT THE FINEST BET ON YOU'VE EVER THOUGHT OF!'"

And Seymour looked down.

It would be hard to say the exact moment when the watchers below realized that something was wrong—all, that is, save Madge Saunderson and the other two girls who had been in the quartette.

It was the Doctor who rose suddenly and said, "Heavens! he's lost his head!"

"Don't shout!" said the Soldier, imperatively. "Leave it to me." He looked up, and his voice rang through the night: "Captain Seymour—General Hardcastle speaking. Don't look down. Look up—do you hear me?—look up. At once!" But the face of the aviator still peered down at them, and it almost seemed as if they could see his wide, staring eyes.

"My God!" muttered the Soldier. "What are we going to do?"

"Let's all shout together," said the Actor.

"No good," cried the General. "You'll only confuse him."

And it was then that the quiet voice of Peter Benton was heard. He was talking to Madge Saunderson, who with the other two girls had been whispering together, ignorant that he was close behind them in the shadow.

"Do I understand you to say, Miss Saunderson, that Captain Seymour is only pretending?"

"You had no business to hear what I said, Mr. Benton," she answered, angrily. "I wasn't talking to you."

But the Doctor appeared interested, and very few of either sex had ever hesitated for long when he became serious.

"You will kindly tell me at once whether this is a joke," he said, grimly.

For a moment the girl's eyes flashed mutinously, and then she laughed—a laugh which rang a little false.

"If you wish to know, it is," she answered, defiantly. "I wanted to find out if Mr. Benton would consider a human life worth saving."

She laughed again, as the four men with one accord turned their backs on her.

"Perhaps it would be as well, then," said Peter, calmly, "for you to tell Captain Seymour that the charming little jest has been discovered, and that he can come down again."

She looked at him contemptuously; then, raising her voice, she shouted to the man above: "You can come down, Captain Seymour: they've found out our little joke."

But the aviator remained motionless.

"Come down," she cried again. "Can't you hear me?" But Seymour's face, like a white patch, still peered down, and suddenly a girl started sobbing.

"It would seem," remarked Peter, "that the plot is going to be successful after all."

The next moment, before anyone realized what was happening, he was climbing steadily up towards the motionless man at the top.

There was only one remark made during that second ascent, and it came from the Doctor.

"You deserve, young woman," he said, quietly, to Madge Saunderson, "to be publicly whipped through the streets of London."

Then silence reigned, broken only by Peter, as he paused every now and then to shout some encouraging remark to the man above.

"I'm coming, Seymour. Absolutely all right. Can't you send for one of your bally machines, and save us both the trouble of climbing down again?"

Between each remark he climbed steadily on, until at last he was within a few feet of the aviator.

"Look away from me, Seymour," he ordered, quietly, gazing straight into the unblinking, staring eyes above. "Look at the brickwork beside you. Do as I tell you, Seymour. Look at the brickwork beside you."

For what seemed an eternity to those below the two men stayed motionless; then a great shuddering sigh broke from them—Seymour was no longer looking down.

It was only the General who spoke, and he was not conscious of doing so. "By Gad! you're right, Doctor," he muttered. "He's thoroughbred right enough—he's thoroughbred."

And the Great Doctor, whose iron nerve had earned for him the reputation of being one of the two finest operating surgeons in Europe, wiped the sweat from his forehead with a hand that shook like a leaf.

Then began the descent.

"Look at the brickwork the whole time, Seymour—and hold fast with your hands. Now give me your right foot: give me your right foot, do you hear? That's it—now the left."

Step by step, with Peter just below him, the aviator came down the chimney, and he was still thirty feet from the bottom when the onlookers saw him pause and pass a hand over his forehead. He gazed down at them, and on his face there was a look of dazed surprise—like a man waking from a dream. Then he swung himself rapidly down to the ground, where he stood facing Peter.

"You've saved my life, old man," he said, a little breathlessly, with the wondering look still in his eyes. "I—don't understand quite what happened. I seemed to go all queer—when I looked down." He laughed shakily. "Dashed funny thing—er—thanks, most awfully. Good Lord! What's the matter, old boy?"

He leant over Peter, who had pitched forward unconscious at his feet.

"I think," remarked the Well-known Soldier to no one in particular, as they walked back, "that the less said about this little episode the better. It was a good deal too near a tragedy for my liking."

"A most instructive case," murmured the Great Doctor, "showing, first of all, the wonderful power of self-hypnotism. I have heard of similar cases in those old-fashioned London houses, where the light in the hall has fascinated people leaning over the banisters two or three storeys above it, and caused them to want to throw themselves over."

"And what is your second observation?" murmured the Rising Barrister, who was always ready to learn.

"The influence of mind over matter," returned the Doctor, briefly, "and the strain involved in the successful overcoming of intense fear. Young Benton has never, and will never, do a braver thing in his life than he did to-night."

"Ah!" murmured the Celebrated Actor, running his hand through his hair. "What a situation! Magnificent! Superb! But, I fear, unstageable."

They entered the drawing-room, to find the conversation being monopolized by a new-comer—a captain in the Coldstream. It was perhaps as well: the remainder of the party seemed singularly indisposed to talk.

"Climbin' chimneys? Might be in you flying wallah's line—but not old Peter. D'you remember, Peter, turnin' pea-green that time we climbed half-way up Wipers Cathedral, before they flattened it?" The Guardsman laughed at the recollection. "No—swimming is his stunt," he continued to everyone at large. "How he ever had the nerve to go overboard—in the most appalling sea—and rescue that fellow, I dunno. It was a great effort that, Peter."

But the only answer was the door closing.

"A good swimmer, is he?" remarked the Great Doctor, casually.

"Wonderful," answered the other. "The rougher it is the more he likes it. He got the Royal Humane Society's medal, you know, for that thing I was talking about. Leave-boat—off Boulogne."

He rattled on, but no one seemed to be paying very much attention. In fact, the only other remark of interest was made by the Rising Barrister, just as the door closed once again—this time behind Sybil.

"That was what I remember hearing about in France," he said, calmly, to the Great Doctor. "You remember I was mentioning it to you before dinner. I knew there was something."

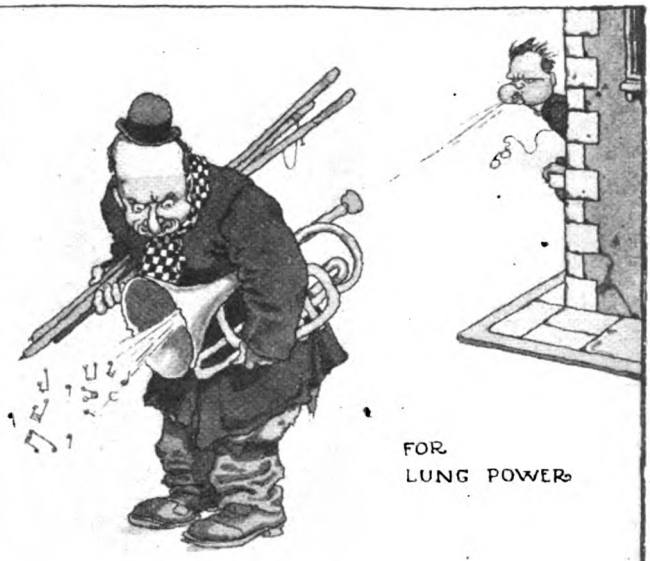
"Wonderful!" murmured the Actor. "Quite wonderful!"

The Rising Barrister coughed deprecatingly, and lit a cigarette.

LOOK AT THIS MAN!

AND SEE WHAT

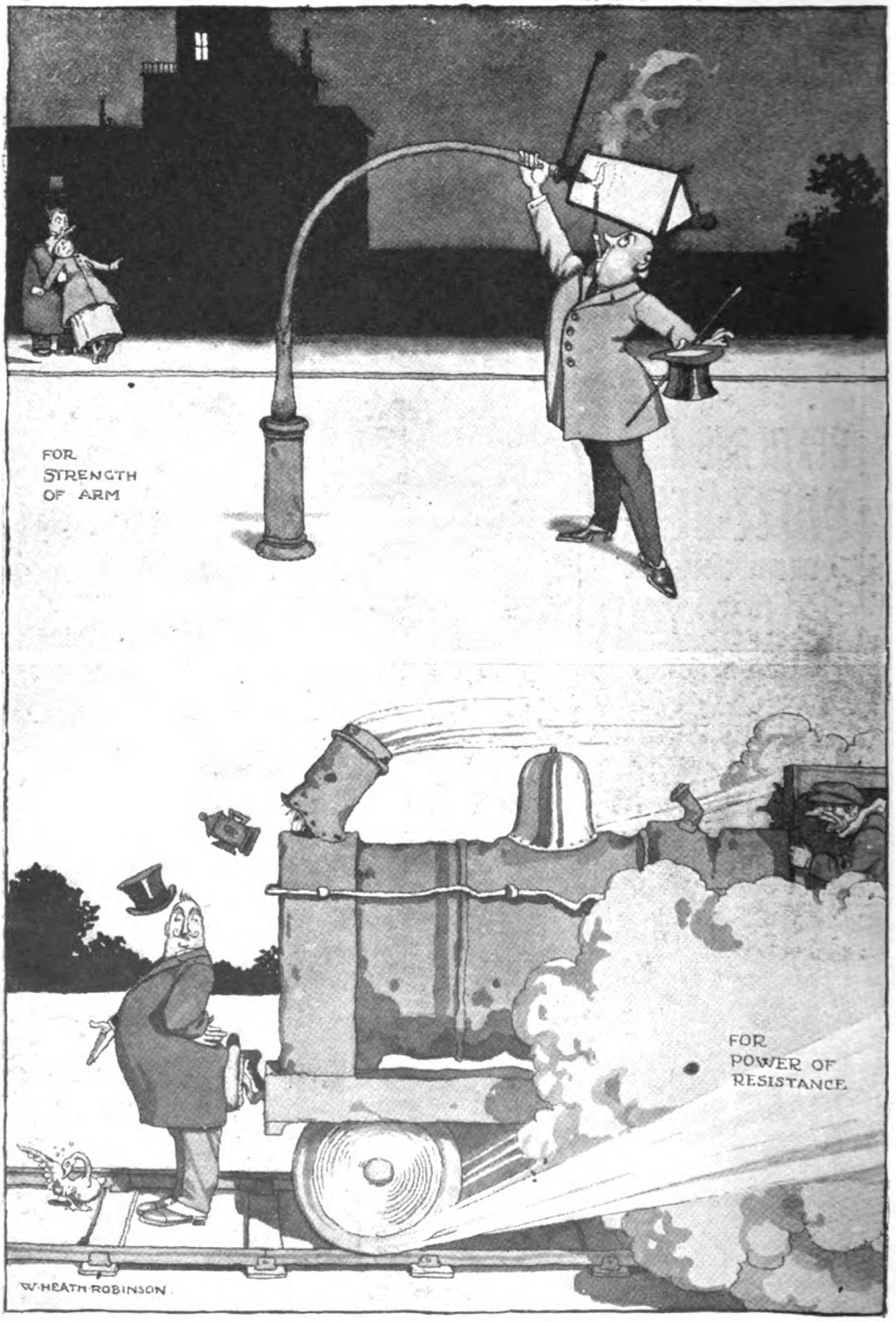
HEATH ROBINSON'S
PHIZZ-JERKS
CULTURE COURSE WILL
DO FOR YOU!



FOR LUNG POWER.

W. HEATH ROBINSON

FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF STRENGTH AND ELAS— TICITY IN WAITERS


FOR
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FOR FAMILY TRANSPORT

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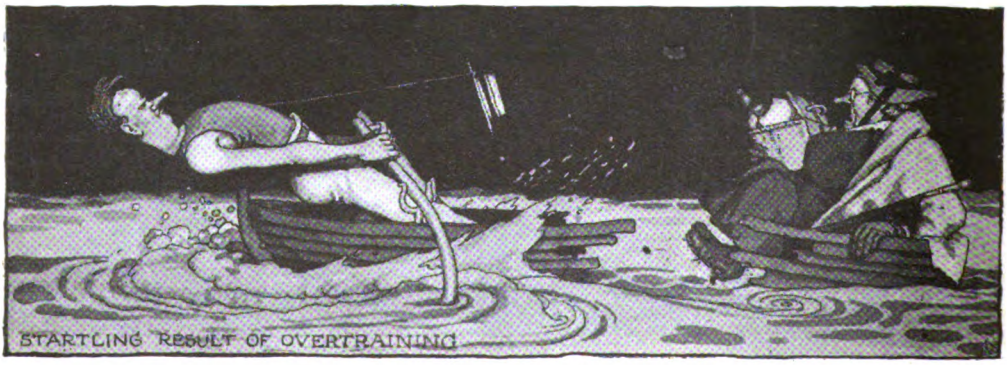

STARTLING RESULT OF OVERTRAINING

"SAGO."

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

By H. B. CRESWELL.

Illustrated by G. E. Studdy.

ONE day just before dinner, when Marytary was making herself tidy, she heard a man calling out in the street; and when she went downstairs he was calling out much louder, so she looked out of window and saw two men walking slowly along the road One man was pushing a hand-cart, and you could see there was straw in it because some was sticking out; but the other man was the man who was shouting, and he had on a red coat like a real soldier, only with long tails; and he had a yellow waistcoat too, and in his arms he was carrying a dear little puppy, and he kept on calling out :—

"Puppy to walk! Puppy to walk!"

So Marytary ran out without any hat to look at the little puppy, and she also wanted to see what was in the hand-cart, and to know what it means when you shout "Puppy to walk! Puppy to walk!" And I think you would have wanted to know, too, if you had been there.

Marytary went up quite close to the man, and it was a sweet little puppy he had in his arms. It was white, with patches of black and yellow all over it, and a long tail. Then she looked into the hand-cart, and it was almost quite full of puppies—more than you could count, and they were all just like the puppy that the man in the red coat was carrying.

"Puppy to walk! Puppy to walk!" shouted the man; but he took no notice of Marytary, and she did not like to ask him why he was calling out "Puppy to walk!" because she felt shy.

Just then Uncle George came up, and he was going to ask Marytary's mummy whether she would like a big basketful of gooseberries to make jam with, because he had a great many gooseberries in his garden. He pulled Marytary's hair for fun, and then he looked into the hand-cart, too. So Marytary asked him, and he told her that the man wore a red coat because he was a Huntsman and took care of the hounds; and that the puppies were the children of the big hounds who run all together in a pack and hunt the foxes. Now all these little puppies were just so old that if they had been children they would have had to go to school, and as there are no schools for puppies the man was taking them round to see if there were any people who would take care of them until they were big, grown-up hounds and could hunt, too.

"May I have one, Uncle George?" said Marytary, and she was so excited you would never believe.

"You had better ask the man," said Uncle George.

"Puppy to walk! Puppy to walk!" the man kept shouting.

"Please may I have one?" Marytary asked him.

The man looked surprised, because Marytary was only a little girl.

"Did you ever have a puppy before?" asked the man.

"No," said Marytary.

"What would you do with him, if you had him?"

"Oh, I would keep him nice and warm by the fire; and let him have all the nicest things to eat, with milk every morning; and he would sleep on my bed."

But the man only laughed and shook his head, and shouted out "Puppy to walk!" and it nearly made Marytary cry, because Uncle George laughed too; but after that Uncle George went and spoke to the man, and it shows how clever grown-up people are, for almost directly he did it the man in the red coat turned round and put the puppy into Marytary's arms. He was not like a doll, for he was all warm, and he moved, and he was very heavy, and he licked Marytary's hands and her face to show he liked Marytary and wanted to be friends; and you can guess how dearly Marytary loved him and how happy she was to have him for her very own until he was grown into a big dog. Then the man wrote down in a book Marytary's name and where she lived, and he asked Marytary what name she was going to give her puppy, and Marytary said "Tiny," but the man said :—

"No, that will not do, because when he is grown up he will be a big dog, and Tiny would not be a good name for him, then." But Marytary could not think of another name, and the man was waiting to write it down in the book, and it made her feel shy.

Now just behind the man was Mrs. Cobley's shop, and a big placard was stuck up with the word S A G O. So Marytary said "Sago," and the man said it was a very good name, and Uncle George did too; so that is why Marytary's dog was called "Sago" ever after.

Then Uncle George told Marytary that she must not keep Sago in front of the fire; nor give him all nice things to eat, nor let him sleep on

her bed; because he was not a pet dog, but a real hound, and it would make him not grow up strong and brave. So Marytary promised to make him sleep in a very nice kennel, with lots of fresh straw that Uncle George would give her; and Sago was only to have two meals a day; and he was not to have cake, or sugar, or milk; and he was not to be too much in the house, and when he got older he was always to go out with Marytary so that his legs would get strong. So Marytary got some delicious puppy biscuits (but *you* would not like them, I think), and they were for no one but Sago; and she made his dinner and supper as Uncle George told her; and no one else did it; and he always had fresh water every day. At first he was nearly always asleep, but afterwards he played with Marytary and followed her about, and, later on, went out with her; and he could soon run faster than she could run or Johnny Peascod could. Sometimes Sago was a bear, and Marytary and Johnny lay on the ground and Sago ate them, but he did not bite them really; and sometimes he was a tiger, and Johnny pretended to shoot him, because Marytary had taught Sago to lie down quite still when she said "Bang!" and sometimes he would play hide and seek, but he always found you, even if you climbed up a tree, for he was a very clever dog and smelt you out, but he could not climb trees himself, and it made Marytary and Johnny laugh ever so much when he tried to climb up them, and you would have laughed too.

"MARYTARY COULD NOT THINK OF ANOTHER NAME."

At last Sago was quite grown up, and this made Marytary sad because she knew he was going right away back to the Huntsman again. At last the day came, and she washed him and brushed his coat, and took him in Uncle George's motor-car, and Johnny came too, and all the other puppies that had grown up were there, and Lord Wiltonbury was there and he said that the best of the puppies would win a prize because it showed that he had been properly fed and taken care of. So then Lord Wiltonbury with other gentlemen looked at the puppies very carefully, and felt them all over, and then Lord Wiltonbury read out the names. Marytary was not listening to what he said, but she heard all the people clapping their hands and Uncle George said, "Well done, Marytary!" So Marytary asked what it was, and he said, "Didn't you hear? Sago is the best dog, and you have got the first prize."

Now, I think it was because of the good food and the clean straw and fresh water Marytary had given Sago every day, and because she played with Sago a great deal, that he grew up clever, and very big and strong.

So Marytary had to go all alone up to the table where Lord Wiltonbury was, and it made her shy; but a lady in a big hat, with a great many teeth, like a horse that is going to bite you, gave her a lovely riding-whip with a real gold handle; so Marytary said "Thank you," and everyone clapped very loud, because she was only a little girl.

But Marytary would much rather have had dear old Sago to take back as a prize than the pretty whip. And her mummy put it in the silver table in the drawing-room, but Marytary did not mind, because she had not got a pony.

Now Marytary thought she would never see Sago again; but a great many weeks after, when it was getting near Christmas Day, Marytary noticed a lot of horses go past the window, and she said, "What is it?" And Rose said, "Oh, there is a meet on the village green to-day"; and it meant that all the hounds and horses were going to meet together on Balton Green before they began to hunt. Then Marytary suddenly thought, "Sago will be there," so she put on her things and went out; and there were the huntsmen in their red coats, on horseback, and all the hounds, so perhaps Sago is there too. But there were so many hounds that you could

"GAVE HER A LOVELY RIDING-WHIP WITH A REAL GOLD HANDLE."

not count them, and they were all alike, so that Marytary could not tell which was Sago, even if he had been there. So she went up close and called "Sago, Sago!" But nothing happened.

Then she called "Sago!" again, louder; but she did not think Sago was there, because he did not come at first, and she could not see him.

Suddenly there was a bark, and a great big hound at the far side came pushing through the pack and jumping over the backs of the other hounds to get to her, and it was dear old Sago. He jumped up and licked her face and ran round her, and his great tail kept knocking against her as he wagged it because he was so pleased. And Marytary talked to him and whispered in his ear as she used to do, so that no one should know what she said; but Sago knew, and it made him bark because he was so pleased, and Marytary was, too.

Then one of the huntsmen cracked his whip and called out, and all the hounds trotted off to begin to hunt, and Sago ran off with them, and he liked it because all the other hounds were there, but I think he would have liked to play with Marytary and Johnny Peascod better.

Directly after dinner Marytary wanted to go out and see Sago hunting, so Rose took her, and Marytary took Majima in the perambulator that she had on her birthday.

They went a long way and they did not see any hunting, and so they went farther, and Rose said it was too far to walk; but still they did not see the hunting, but only one man riding home on a very muddy horse. At last Rose said they were to go back because it was getting late.

Now, they had not gone very far on the way home when Marytary heard a rustling noise in the hedge, and then it stopped. She could not see anything, and Rose said it was a rabbit; but it was not a rabbit at all, for just then a great hound came pushing through the thick hedge and went trotting slowly down the road in front of them. This hound was splashed all over with mud and water, and he was very tired, for his head hung down and his tail did too, and it showed he had been hunting; and he was holding up one of his hind legs and hopping along on three legs, and it was because he had injured one of his legs and it hurt him if he used it.

Then Marytary got very red, and Rose said:—

"What's the matter, Miss Marytary?"

But Marytary could not answer because she was so excited. Now, the reason she was excited was that she thought it was Sago, but she could not be sure because all hounds are so like one another. So she called out:—

"Sago, Sago, Sago!"

And that showed that it was Sago all the time, for he stopped at once and looked back over his shoulder. So Marytary ran up and he licked her, but he stood quite still and did not wag his tail or bark, and then Marytary saw that the leg he was holding up was bleeding, and there was a great cut on it, for he had trodden on a bit of glass when he was hunting; and Marytary knew that poor old Sago was in great pain and that was why he went so slowly, and did not wag his tail or bark when she spoke to him. Marytary did not know what to do at first, because Sago lay down on the wet road and would not get up; and then she had a splendid idea, and Rose thought it was too, and this is what Marytary told Rose and they both did.

First they wetted Marytary's handkerchief with clean water in a stream and washed the wound on Sago's leg. Then they tied the handkerchief tight round his leg, and then Rose took Majima out of the perambulator and they lifted poor Sago into it and made him comfortable, and

tucked him up with the perambulator rug so that only his head and his tail stuck out, and then they started off for home, and you could tell Sago was pleased because the end of his tail, where it stuck out, began to wag a little.

Now I will tell you a secret that Marytary guessed quite right. The secret is that Sago was all the time really on his way to Marytary's house, because he knew Marytary would be kind to him and take great care of him. He meant to bark outside the door till she came, but he was so tired that I do not think he could have got so far on only three legs, and if Marytary had not found him I really don't know what would have happened to poor Sago. But she *did* find him, so that was all right.

When they reached Pub Cottage, which is the name of Marytary's house, because it is opposite the inn, Mrs. Marytary was at the door, for she had been out to tea, and she said :—

"My dear Marytary, how late you are! Where have you—— Oh, good gracious! What have you got in your perambulator?"

"It's Sago, mummy; and he has hurt his leg, and he is all wet and muddy and covered with blood, and I *know* he was trying to come back to me all the time."

"But, my dear child, we cannot have a great dog like that in the house. And if he is injured he must go to the Vet."

Now the Vet. is the doctor that comes when an animal is ill, because an ordinary doctor does not know how to do it properly.

But when Mrs. Marytary saw how ill poor Sago was she could not send him away, so she told Jane, and they all dried Sago with towels, and tied up his leg again, and got a clothes-basket with a blanket in it, and put Sago into it and left him in front of the kitchen fire. And they gave him the nicest supper they could find, and it was meat and bread all broken up and warm soup poured over it, and Sago ate it all and licked the plate so clean that you would think it had been washed. Then Sago went to sleep, and when Marytary said good-night to him, just at her bedtime, he half woke up and licked her hand, and wagged his tail, so I think he was getting better.

In the morning he had a good breakfast, and it was bread and warm milk, but he would not get up because his leg hurt him; and the Vet. came, and the Huntsman too, for Mrs. Marytary had written to tell them Sago was there. The Vet. tied up Sago's leg very neatly, and then he talked to the Huntsman, and he said, "It's all up with him," and he meant that Sago would always be lame and could not hunt any more.

That made the Huntsman very sad. "He's the best hound in the kennel," he said; "the Master wouldn't part with him for thirty quid," and that is a lot of money, and it shows what a good dog Sago really was.

At last the Vet. went away, and the Huntsman said to Mrs. Marytary :—

"I'll send over for the hound to-morrow morning, lady. I can't manage it to-day."

"But," said Marytary, "mayn't I keep him if he cannot hunt any more?"

"You'll have to ask his lordship," said the Huntsman.

"Oh, no, darling, we can't have a great dog like that in the house," said her mother, and it made Marytary want to cry.

Then the Huntsman had a glass of wine because men like it—but it is not nice, really—and he went away; and this is what Marytary did after he had gone; and she had done it before, but you must promise never to do it to *your* mummy.

She climbed on to her mother's knee and put her arms round her neck and put her mouth close to her mother's ear, and her mother listened to what she was going to whisper; and then Marytary said softly :—

"Yes."

"No, dear, you cannot keep him," said her mother; and she tried to make Marytary get down, but Marytary held her tight round her neck and whispered :—

"Yes."

"No, dear."

"Yes."

"No, dear; I've told you it's out of the question."

Then Marytary blew into her mother's ear. It tickled Mrs. Marytary and

"DEAR OLD SAGO JUMPED UP AND LICKED HER FACE."

So Marytary kissed her mother again and jumped about for joy. But she had to ask Lord Wiltonbury, because Sago was one of his hounds and belonged to him; so she wrote, and this is what she said, but her mother addressed the envelope:—

"Please may I have Sago for my very own because I love him and he does to MARYTARY."

"THEY TUCKED HIM UP WITH THE PERAMBULATOR RUG, SO THAT ONLY HIS HEAD AND TAIL STUCK OUT."

made her smile, so Marytary laguhed and said, "Yes."

"No!"

"Yes!"

"No!"

Then Marytary blew into her ear again very hard, and it made her mother laugh outright. Marytary kissed her all over. "Say 'Yes,' mummy."

"You are a dreadful child!" said her mother, laughing. "But if I let you keep Sago you must not allow him to come into the house, and you must look after him and keep him from mischief."

And this is the real letter that came for her by the postman two days afterwards:—

"Lord Wiltonbury presents his compliments to Marytary, and he gives her Sago for her very own."

And that is how Sago became Marytary's very own dog, and she wrote to Johnny and told him, because he was away at school.

Sago's leg got well, and it did not hurt him any more, and he lived happy ever after with Marytary; but his injured leg was not so strong as his other legs, and that is why, when he wanted to run very fast indeed, he could not.

THE QUEST OF BEAUTY.

By EDWIN F. BOWERS, M.D.

"IF Cleopatra's nose had been shorter, it would have changed the history of the world." So concludes Pascal ; and, being a Frenchman and a philosopher, he knew. It might also be observed that a hare lip or a bald head on Helen of Troy would have made Homer pause. Also no mere man can be at his best with a pair of large, outstanding ears, which, viewed from behind, give him the appearance of a startled fawn or a ferocious jack rabbit.

By the appeal of the strong, symmetrical limb, the well-developed body, the bright eye, the clear complexion, and the undeniable aspect of vigorous good health that radiates from a clear-blooded man or woman, Nature achieves her ultimate object—the attraction between the sexes. This is unquestionably the real, fundamental reason for a beauty that influences us to such a degree. So, to become as attractive as Nature, art, and science permit is a duty we owe to ourselves and to society.

Beauty is perhaps the most valuable asset of a woman ; for it is only human nature to desire to be surrounded by beautiful things, and there is no more beautiful thing on earth than a beautiful woman.

Therefore, the search for beauty being justified, how far is it justified ? Where do physiological reason and human skill leave off, and foolishness and fakery begin ? What processes and methods have scientific sanction, and which are futile, or actually harmful ?

Time has an unpleasant fashion of etching his imprint upon our classic features. Honourable scars in our battle with Destiny they may be, but oftentimes most unsightly. The worst of it is that they always make their first appearance upon the face, where they are most in evidence. This is because of the mobility of the facial muscles, of the larger part they are called upon to play in expressing emotions. That is one reason why the neck, shoulders, and arms of many a woman of fifty could properly belong to a girl of eighteen. If there were nothing else to justify *d collet* dress, this alone should prove sufficient.

The first and most important cause of beauty is good health. In fact, true beauty can rarely be dissociated from good health ; for a clear skin is rarely found except with a body that performs its functions normally.

Even without medical aid, if one is careful to establish perfect regularity of the natural physical processes, to secure wholesome food, and to take daily baths, one can accomplish wonders in bringing about this normal condition. Then, with proper dress—dress that favours free and untrammelled circulation of the blood to all parts of the body—a pasty or disfigured complexion or a red nose should clear up. If it does not, the advice of the family physician should be sought ; for any competent medical man can soon set things to rights by a course of blood-making, or alterative and eliminative treatment, and regulation of the diet. And he is not likely to charge nearly so much for the service as some other varieties of " beauty specialists."

The next most obvious and easily eradicated aids to ugliness are blackheads.

Among the fair sex these enlarged pores usually make their first appearance upon the nose. The reason is clear ; for these areas receive most attention from the powder-puff. After the pores are nicely dilated from the action of a hot bath, it is very easy to fill them full of powder. This, of course, prevents the escape of impurities, and after being properly coloured by dirt they form what we know as blackheads.

The cure is a comparatively simple matter ; although it may take some time. First, stop using powder ; then soak the nose in a hot cloth, thoroughly dilating the pores. If the skin is very thick, the blackheads should be radically removed with a special instrument devised for this purpose. Next, wash the parts thoroughly and carefully with a bland soap, preferably of vegetable oils, using a camel-hair face-brush and rinsing with hot water.

Then " iron " all the pores into a state of tonic contraction with a small piece of ice, and keep them so contracted by applications of witch-hazel. And give them a chance to keep themselves clean by refraining from further blocking their orifices. Thus will you and blackheads have parted company.

Next we have the tell-tale tracery of wrinkles. The actual cause of wrinkles is of course the gradual loss of fatty tissue in the layers that pad the muscles, together with a hardening or actual shrinking of these muscles, and a loss of elasticity in the skin stretched over them. These evidences of age are certain to manifest themselves sooner or later. It is merely a question of living long enough to give them a chance.

Many women afflicted with wrinkles due to sagging facial muscles have accomplished wonders by sitting in front of a mirror for five-minute periods three or four times a day, and " making faces " at themselves. That lady wins who can knot and unknot her facial muscles and contort her countenance into the most diverse and grotesque shapes with the least effort. Exercising these groups of muscles gives them tone, relieves their flaccidity, and is really a local application of physical culture. Besides, the suggestion of happiness is implanted by seeing how much better-looking they are when the face isn't working than when it is.

Not so commendable is that method of wrinkle removal which consists in taking hide and hair off the martyr worshipping at the shrine of Beauty. This is accomplished usually by means of a

caustic paste—a paste that "kills" the superficial tissue. Combinations of mercury and egg albumin, or caustic acids or alkalies, are generally employed for this purpose, and some very disagreeable burns and scars have been inflicted by their agency. And the sufferer almost invariably retains her original collection of wrinkles.

Those little skin-thickened tumours known as warts constitute another gift that humanity, especially the feminine part of it, can very well do without. Any physician can burn these off painlessly and effectually, so one need not keep them unless one chooses to.

The common or domestic mole, with or without hair, can be driven from the premises by the same gentle means that are employed so successfully with warts. Perhaps electrolysis is the most popular and effective form of treatment for moles, and in the hands of an expert it leaves very little scar tissue.

"stretch" there is in a healthy skin, especially if it is not too old.

With the expense of these various methods and procedures we are not here concerned. A thing is really cheap at any price that transforms unattractiveness into attractiveness. Competition and the law of supply and demand may be relied upon to regulate charges. If a woman wishes to be robbed in *de luxe* style, she will no doubt find ample opportunity. If, on the contrary, she recognizes that bad teeth, bad skin, and lustreless hair are wrapped up in bad health she will begin by attending to her teeth and health. She will realize that her fight against advancing years, skin blotches, and unsightly conditions really began in earnest when she first began to diet—when she sacrificed the seductive chocolate cream and tabooed pastry.

However, after the dentist and the family physician have done their utmost, if anything

"MANY WOMEN AFFLICTED WITH WRINKLES HAVE ACCOMPLISHED WONDERS BY SITTING IN FRONT OF A MIRROR AND 'MAKING FACES' AT THEMSELVES."

Even better, as the remaining scar is hardly perceptible, is the treatment of all these various growths with "carbonic snow" (frozen carbon dioxide). Most skin specialists now employ this in preference to any other method in removing growths and skin defects.

Those bluish discolorations known as nævi usually respond to treatment by carbonic snow. If this fails, however, catgut sutures may be introduced under the skin at their base, taking several sittings for this purpose. These close off the circulation, as well as the colour deposit, and in time the growth dies of starvation, and is replaced by healthy, colourless tissue.

Disfiguring scars, caused by burns, wounds, or cuts, can frequently be removed by dissecting away the scar tissue, after which the bordering skin can be stretched over the denuded surface, and the edges sutured together. It is surprising and very gratifying to find what an amount of

yet remains, a "beauty expert" who is really what he claims to be may be sought. For there are conscientious beauty specialists who are capable and honest—and there are others who should be in prison. Heretofore "cosmetic surgery" has remained almost exclusively in the hands of irregular practitioners; but all signs indicate that this form of surgical advance will soon become a part of regular medicine.

So we have seen that, while there is much to be avoided in the quest for beauty, there is also much that is scientific, justifiable, and commendable. And, even though it should entail a little expense and trouble, beauty is always rewarded, even if by nothing else than itself.

Heaven knows there are few enough of us who dare look a mirror in the eye without a blush of apology! If there exists any legitimate means of increasing that number, in fair Aphrodite's name let us exert ourselves to that end!

The Call of Cricket.

By HYLTON CLEAVER.

Illustrated by J. H. Thorpe.

I.

WHITAKER did not so much as move a muscle of his face.

He looked up the pitch. He saw a little man swathed in a long white coat, the tails of which lay upon the vivid green of the grass behind him; he saw Somerville marking with his heel the spot from which he was going to bowl; that was all. Then his grip grew just a little tighter upon the handle of his bat as his wrists relaxed in readiness. Somerville had started his run; his hand had disappeared behind his back; then his arm swung and the red ball was spinning towards him. Whitaker lifted his bat and his left foot moved forward. He knew what was going to happen as if it were a certainty. He played his stroke. Before he had even finished the forward swing of it he knew that he had failed. The edge of his bat touched the ball as it curled in to his legs and played it neatly on to his wicket.

For a moment he stood quite still . . . he had known so exactly how it would be. The match had lain between the batsman and the bowler, and the bowler had won. Applause was ringing in his ears; applause for the bowler. Somebody said "Hard luck" He took no notice. The other batsman came regretfully up the pitch and joined him, and then they started slowly back towards the pavilion, whilst in their wake came the little man in the long white coat, with his colleague and the fielders following after.

"I'm really sorry," said Somerville, afterwards. "For a minute I did wonder whether I ought to send an easy one. It seems a rotten thing to play against the school and beat 'em. But after all it was the game—so I tried to do it. But I'm sorry it was you."

"I shall never be able to play that ball as long as I live. It's Burton's fault," said Whitaker. "He taught you how to bowl it; and I felt his eyes upon me all the time I was waiting for you to bowl. Some chaps know what to do with it, but, somehow or other, it gets me every time."

"Never mind," said Somerville, "You've got your colours, and after to-day I *may* get mine. Then we shall never play against each other again. I believe they only put me in that scratch team to see how I could show up against the school's best batsman."

"And now," said Whitaker, "they know."

Burton had discarded his white coat, and was coming towards them. They met, and, for a while, neither spoke.

"You'll get your colours now, sir," said the little man at last, and nodded to Somerville in sober satisfaction. Then he turned to Whitaker and his eyes were wise with understanding. "You've got yours, sir, so it doesn't matter, does it? And that was a pretty innings, anyway, till they put Mr. Somerville on against you."

"Yes, I've got my colours," said Whitaker, "that was my ambition—last year. Now I've set my heart on something a little higher. I want to play for the county. I shall never rest till I do that, now. I *mean* to do it." He became dogmatic. "*I will!*"

Burton nodded his head slowly.

"You'll play for the county, sir, just as soon as you've learned how to play that ball. I've taught Mr. Somerville how to bowl it. When am I going to teach you how to put it away for four?"

Whitaker looked down at him from his lean height. "Burton," said he, "how many men have you taught to bowl that curly one? How many chaps have I got to guard against if ever I get into county cricket?"

The little man considered.

"There's nobody can bowl it properly, sir, but me, as I knows of; me—and *him*"—he nodded his head towards the other. "There's many I've showed it to, but there's nobody copied the knack of it like Mr. Somerville. I'm past county cricket now, but *you'll* play at the Oval"—he paused as if in warning—"and you *may* meet *him*."

On an evening some days later Whitaker sat at his study window looking out into the dusk of evening. This would be his last term at school. What lay ahead? He reasoned it out, foreseeing himself in various walks of life, attaining perchance a measure of success in each. He also imagined himself figuring with conspicuous ability in county cricket—playing perhaps for the Gentlemen of England or batting nobly in a Test Match. The possibility of Somerville, disguised behind a heavy moustache, turning up for Australia and promptly bowling him out with the one ball he could never play also occurred to him as a passing dread, but not altogether seriously.

Then there came suddenly a knock on the door, and when he turned to see who came, Somerville himself stood on the threshold.

There was a queer look on his face, seeming to say that he had not come merely to talk about cricket, and he moved to the window and stood by Whitaker for a moment before he said:—

"I suppose you couldn't lend me five pounds?"

At first Whitaker did not know whether to laugh or moan.

Somerville began to explain.

"My father's broke," he said with sudden, simple directness. "I've had a letter. He's thoroughly broke. Not just hard up—*broke*, you understand. He's been swindled. Every penny that he had has gone, and he's written to say that he doesn't know how he's going to pay the bill here at the end of the term. You see what it will mean? I've won my colours and I've got to buy them. There'll be railway fares for all the away matches. There'll be tips. It'll be the most expensive term for him since I've been at school. He would have been frightfully bucked. He's mad on cricket; and I was going to write and let him know. He would have sent me five pounds. You see, I owe Burton for a bat and cricket boots—and there'll be my blazer and cap. That's why I'm asking you—if you can help."

Whitaker answered slowly, weighing his words.

"Five Pounds? *Five pounds?* My word, that's a lot of money. I can barely lend you five bob." He ended on a note of distinct sadness.

"Yes," said Somerville, "that's what I expected. I don't know what to do. My father seems to think he might pull round a bit during the term, and he says I'm to stay on and try not to make the extras too heavy, but it's as clear as day that he's got all he can do to keep the home together, and I haven't the heart to ask him for mere pocket money. It isn't his fault. He's been swindled. The people who swindled him have squeezed him dry."

"Who's swindled him?"

"Some swine in the City named Kettle and Kettle. He told me about them when I was at home."

Somerville had hardly noticed the other, but Whitaker was staring out of the window. He had half risen out of his chair. His eyes were wide and glazed. He spoke at last, and his voice was scarcely above a whisper.

"Who?"

Somerville turned to him listlessly.

"Kettle," said he, "and Kettle."

Whitaker was dumb. He heard a voice seemingly a long way off saying to him, "Do you know them?" but he could make no answer.

It was true, then. He had heard what he took to be lying whispers at times and had never believed them. Once he had seen a paragraph in a weekly paper and had not understood it. If what Somerville said was true he could understand it now. He looked up. "You don't know *anywhere*," Somerville was saying, "where I could get five pounds?"

"I don't," he answered, "but I'll try to think."

Somerville turned towards the door. "I wouldn't have asked you, only you know better than anyone else what it will mean to me if I can't afford to buy my first eleven colours."

Then he was gone. And sitting alone by the window looking out again into the dusk, there came to Whitaker the answer to a question that had always troubled him.

Ever since he had been able to think for himself there had been an atmosphere in his widowed father's home for which he had had no taste—the friends who came to the house — his father's spasmodic affluence. Now, at last, he could put two and two together and could understand the answer. For his father's business was hidden behind the title of Kettle and Kettle.

"'BURTON,' SAID HE, 'HOW MANY MEN HAVE YOU TAUGHT TO BOWL THAT CURLY ONE?'"

Whitaker was a young man with an imaginative soul, and in the days that followed he grew to learn what it feels like to have a skeleton in the cupboard. Sometimes he half believed that this skeleton had stepped out of the cupboard and was stalking behind him whispering words of counsel in a husky croak. One evening as he came from nets a hand even reached out and rested upon his

shoulder, and he jumped unconsciously, in the half belief that it was the hand of the skeleton reaching out to tap him.

It was not. It was Bellamy, captain of cricket.

"I suppose you know what's happened?" said he. "Have you heard?"

He had not heard, and he said so.

"Thorne left the cash-box open for half an hour in his room, and somebody has pinched about five pounds out of the cricket fund."

Whitaker looked up. There was a feverish prickle in his cheeks; a coldness around his heart. "Go on!" he said.

The night was hideously long. He twisted and turned in his bed as each new torturing thought came to him. Because of his father Somerville had been led to steal. He would, of course, be depending on being able to pay the money back, and Whitaker knew as well as any fellow in the school the terrible temptation that Somerville must have known to stay at all costs till the end of the cricket season. Somerville was not a thief in the same sense that Whitaker's father was. Properly speaking, Somerville had only borrowed. But if he were found out it would, nevertheless, mean expulsion.

It was not till early morning that the only thing to do came to him with sudden clearness. He had had his colours the previous year, and this term did not mean so much to him as it did to Somerville. Nor would it matter very much what fellows thought of him. It might be that one day the truth could be told. Meanwhile Somerville was suffering, not for the sins of his own father, but for the sins of Whitaker's, who had stolen, not openly and in the light of day, but by the craft and cunning of mean trickery in business. It was his clear duty to do all in his power to right this wrong. He himself ought to assume the burden that his father had cast on Somerville. He would do it. He would create evidence that would divert any chance of Somerville being suspected, by throwing the guilt upon himself, the own son of the man who had done the swindling.

As he lay he made his plans. He would never enter his father's home again. He would never be able to sit on a chair in that house now without wondering whether it were paid for with another's money. He would not profit another day by such of his father's money as was being expended upon him at this school. He would sacrifice his cricket—and he would cut free. Only so could he save Somerville—and his own conscience. Whitaker had the character of an individualist. Next day he ran away.

II.

THE sun came through the windows, patching the pages of a ledger with its rays. The young man who was stooping over his desk stopped writing all at once and sat for a moment staring at the light upon the page. Each time the sun came through that window he found himself remembering.

It was a long, long time ago—two years—three cricket seasons. Yet in his mind's eye he could see again the wide rolling greenness of the cricket field at school, the trees along the boundary, the white pavilion glistening like a palace in the sun.

The magic lure of sunshine—the cricket fever in his blood again!

He suddenly threw down his pen.

In the vastness of that building he was of small account. Nevertheless, perched upon a stool, one might at any time have come upon Whitaker, long and lean, and prone to silence, working on books like some odd Dickens character—Whitaker, known in that place of business, though, as Wade.

He had been too wise to make for the Colonies; he had let London swallow him into hiding—a kindness London will do for any man. The money that he had, had carried him there and given him a meal and one night's lodging; and on the morrow he had found work by a fortunate inquiry. The National Health Insurance Act had become law, and some of the large insurance offices required additional clerks at short notice; one of them had engaged Whitaker on sight. They paid him by the hour, and though it was not a living wage he lived on it. He came early and worked late, so that by stern endeavour and precise economy he saved little by little enough for a clothing fund.

Other supernumerary clerks came and went, and a few of the best won permanent employment, Whitaker amongst them.

So those who had set their eyes to seek him at a distance had never found him hiding almost under his father's elbow. He had never seen his father, and did not know whether he was troubled or not, but he suspected not; and he had grown a moustache which he counted some slight additional disguise.

So now he glanced round him thoughtfully. One seedy individual near by was drafting policies; a boy was pinning papers tidily together.

Anyway, it was half-past twelve. He reached for his hat.

At last he was out in the open air again. The sun beat down upon his face. If it had not been so unutterably sad, he could have laughed in gentle satisfaction. But it was summer, and the germ of cricket fever had him in its grip.

For two whole years he had turned his back upon the game. With all due modesty he had known that he was too good a batsman not to shine in club cricket if he played. And it was by shining at cricket that he would as likely as not be ultimately discovered. For two whole years this clear fact had weighed with him. To-day it suddenly ceased to count. He was tired of sitting on a bench at the Oval; the cricket news in the *Sportsman* only obsessed him with despair. He needed the feel of a bat. His shoulders were cramped with waiting. He was head tired and soul tired. And the longing was too strong. It was already towards the middle of August; soon the summer would be done and he would be faced again by the dreariness of winter.

There was an excellent club connected with

"'I SUPPOSE YOU KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENED?" SAID BELLAMY. 'THORNE LEFT THE CASH-BOX OPEN FOR HALF AN HOUR IN HIS ROOM, AND SOMEBODY HAS PINCHED ABOUT FIVE POUNDS OUT OF THE CRICKET FUND.'"

the office, boasting a first-class ground, and claiming the pick of nearly a thousand men. To the captain of that club he went, so soon as he came in from his lunch. His mind was made up. He was going to risk it.

"Can I come down to the nets for a knock?" he said. "I want to get some cricket." And he almost added, "If I don't, I shall bust."

A few days later it was the captain of the club who visited him. He was a gaunt man, keen of visage and solemn of speech.

"I don't know who you are," said he, "except that your name's Wade. But after your showing in that pick-up game, and your hitting at nets, we need you. I want you to play for the side on Saturday. It's the first time we've had a match with the M.C.C., and we had a struggle to get it. We mean to put up a great show. It'll make no end of difference if the club can do well. It's going to be rather a gala day, too—a concert in the evening and all that—so we want you."

Whitaker looked at him. The captain answered his look with one almost of appeal.

"Yes," said Whitaker at last, "I'd like to."

It was a day of wonder. Right to the far horizon the sky was a canopy of flawless blue. Wherever one looked all folk were moving with leisurely stateliness, as if at peace with all the world. Sunshine and Cricket had weaved their spell.

In through the gate came Whitaker. He had no cricket bag. His suit was noticeably worn and his trousers were shapeless at the knees. Under his arm he carried white trousers and a shirt, concealed, together with borrowed boots, in a bundle of brown paper. He was alone, but to be alone had been his choice ever since he had run away from school.

Eyes of the curious turned to him lazily as he reached the pavilion and waited upon the steps of it for a while before he went in to change.

When next he was seen the home side were going out to field and he was walking thoughtfully in rear.

It was a batsman's wicket, and the bowling seemed to lack bite. Fifty went up before the first M.C.C. wicket fell. It was seventy-three for two and ninety for three. For the fourth wicket there came another long stand.

And whilst the score was mounting a very small man in an old straw hat came wandering along the crowded seats looking for a place. Beside a man who wore the club colours of the fielding side he found a chair at last, and he sat down and tilted his hat over his eyes to shield them from the sun. It was half an hour afterwards that a hard drive carried the ball well under Whitaker's outstretched hand, and sent him chasing after it at top speed. The ball bounced over the boundary and came to the little man's feet, and he stooped and picked it up, tossing it back; and as Whitaker went trotting back to his place the little man stood staring after him like an unbeliever who had nevertheless seen a vision. He sat down very slowly, and he stayed leaning forward in his chair, his hands upon his knees, for some few minutes afterwards, lost in contemplation of that figure in the field, whilst his eyes slowly protruded from his head. At last he turned to his neighbour.

"That young gentleman in the country there," he demanded—"the tall one with the bare head. Could you tell me his name? Do you know——?"

The neighbour jerked his head forward.

"*That* one? Well, he's never played for the club before, but they tell me his name's Wade."

The little man stared at him in dubious vexation.

"Are you sure? Are you sure it isn't Whitaker?"

"Wade," said the other, "so they tell me."

For a moment the little man was silent.

"I knew a young gentleman very like him—very like him indeed—some two or three years ago at school. He hadn't a moustache then, of course, but they're things that grow. The finest schoolboy batsman I ever came up against. He left suddenly. If he had stayed to the end of the term I could have cured him of his only weakness and sent him out to be an All-England batsman. But—he left."

"What school was that?"

The little man told him. "They've broken up," he added. "It's holiday time. That's why I'm playing to-day. I and another fellow came down to make up the team."

He stopped. Something had suddenly struck him. He would most likely not be needed to bat. But he might be needed to bowl. And there was one sure way of settling all doubt in his mind.

If he bowled——

A slow smile came into his wizened countenance.

Twenty minutes later the M.C.C., having reached the total of three hundred for six, declared their innings closed, leaving the home side barely time to get the runs.

And when Whitaker came in from the field the little man had moved with quiet consideration out of the way.

As Whitaker had gone out to bat, he had noticed the score that stood to the credit of the side of clerks, and he remembered that it had been twenty for two. Now the heat of the day had passed and the cool of evening was as a restful spirit. Between the overs he glanced at the score-board again; its message of achievement stood in figures of white against the black for all who cared to read. 250 for 8.

From out in the field the little man was consulting the clock. There was only another quarter of an hour to go. The boy had made his century, and it had been a brilliant innings, but the home side could not win. This seemed to decide him.

He moved to the captain of his side and spoke to him. The captain nodded.

So it was that when Whitaker next looked up the pitch he saw a curious sight. There came back to him in one gripping second the cricket ground at school; a little man in a long white coat gazing at him soulfully; Somerville marking with his heel the spot from which he was going to bowl. Why or how Burton had come he had no shadow of idea. He knew quite well that he had not batted. He had not noticed him at lunch or tea. Nothing had drawn attention to him in the field. Yet he was there upon the crease and he was going to bowl. Burton had come out of the past, and he was going to be discovered. Sudden chill fear seized Whitaker about the heart. His years of patient hiding were all going to be thrown away. Burton would send the news of his discovery back to the school. There would be a brief hue and cry and he would be dragged into the light of day. These thoughts flashed into his mind and were scattered by others following swiftly after.

Then Burton was trotting to the wicket. His arm swung. Just as ever, the ball swung temptingly down the pitch, curled, and came in cunningly at his legs. He had been well set, and now his nerve was gone. He tried to play safe. His bat came up with a neat turn of the wrists and his left foot drew in to his right as he shaped to play back. There came a crack, and a broken bail jumped into the air; a brief pause of wonder; sudden applause. Then Whitaker was moving back to the pavilion with an almost weary stride. He did not hear the tumultuous cheering that greeted him as the man who had made a brilliant century against the M.C.C. He

"HE HAD BEEN WELL SET, AND NOW HIS NERVE WAS GONE. THERE CAME A CRACK, AND A BROKEN BAIL JUMPED INTO THE AIR."

only knew that he was infallibly discovered. He gave not so much as a glance towards Burton.

Now, if ever, he had to be true to his chosen resolution.

With a sad perplexity Burton stood at the wicket, twisting and turning the ball in his hands, watching him go.

And when some five minutes later the tenth wicket fell and the little man came in with the fielders, Whitaker was nowhere to be seen.

In point of fact, Whitaker had gone.

Decision came to Whitaker on Sunday. The lure of sunshine, the call of cricket in his soul, had played him false. He looked back with a kind of sad thanksgiving to that one great

innings which had marked the recommencement of happiness, and its finish.

There was no time to be lost. Burton was human; he would be bound to spread the news of his discovery. There was nothing for Whitaker to do but to disappear all over again. So, for the second time in his life, Whitaker was true to his own best impulse. On Monday he handed in his resignation, and when he went out into the sunniness of Holborn for his lunch he went also to look for another job.

The letter came as a severe surprise. It was brief and couched in official language, and it reached Whitaker on the Wednesday. He held it before his eyes stiffly for quite a long time, staring at it giddily, but its import was clear enough. The County Committee were asking him to turn out in a trial match at the Oval with a view to his probable selection thereafter in the county side.

As he read and re-read the unmistakable invitation he found himself going hot and cold by turns. On what could they have judged him? Who had been in that M.C.C. Eleven? Was this Burton's doing? He could not decide. He had no power to do anything but stare into vacancy, conjuring up the vision of a realized ambition and all that it meant. He tried to put it from him. He told himself stubbornly that the chance must be refused, yet all the while he knew in his heart that he could not refuse it. At last quite suddenly there sprang in amongst the turbulent ideas that were fighting for supremacy in his mind one single, overpowering solution. He would be entitled to leave the office on the following Friday, that being pay-day. He would draw his month's money and he would add his own slender savings. Then he would take the annual holiday which was almost due to him. The cost did not matter. He would spend that holiday playing cricket. The money might last ten days. With anything like luck that would be long enough. In that time he might have played for the county. And when eventually he put his hand into his pocket and found that he had no more money there he would just go quietly away. Somehow or other he would be able to get a living. Even if it were manual labour—even if it were selling fish—it would have been worth it. He would have kept his promise. His great ambition would have been achieved.

III.

WHITAKER was staring engrossed and wondering at the lists upon the notice-board outside the dressing-room at the Oval, and he did not therefore hear amongst so many passing footsteps the tread of one who stopped behind him; only when a hand descended sharply upon his shoulder did he turn suddenly upon his heel. And then he stood with boggling eyes and a heart that felt stiff and still.

"Somerville!" said he at last.

The young man drew attention to his outstretched hand, and Whitaker slowly took it.

"I've just seen your name. I was looking at it just then. You're playing on the other side!"

Somerville laid a hand upon his arm. "Come away for a little while," said he; "I want to talk to you. Why did you run away?"

Whitaker fought for his self-control; but he was very nearly trembling.

"I only ask you," said the other, "because if you thought I pinched that money you were wrong. A couple of days after you'd gone Thorne went through his books with Sykes and they found an idiotic mistake in the accounts. There was no money stolen at all."

Still Whitaker did not speak.

"There's another thing I don't believe you know," said Somerville. "I understand exactly why you went away. It was to try and make up for what your father had done." He paused. "You see, a whole lot came out in the inquiry, and one of the reporters on the local rag got hold of the facts about your father and published them, and as one or two other things came to be known about the same time, your father—excuse me saying it—well, he cleared.

"You ran away to save me," continued Somerville after a moment's thought; "so you believed, anyway; only, of course, I told the Head all I knew, and I told my father, too. And my father wants to meet you."

At last Whitaker spoke.

"Look here, Somerville," said he, "you seem to be able to tell me a good deal. Can you tell me why I've been asked to come here and play cricket?"

"That's got a little to do with my father," said the other, "and a little to do with Burton. Fortune has turned, you see. My father's done very well in the last eighteen months. You remember me telling you he was mad on cricket? Well, he belongs to the County Club, and he was so keen for me to play that he got Burton to come down to our place in the holidays and coach me in private. So, you see, when Burton found you, we were the first people to hear, and my father was so bucked that he told the County Committee all about you, and then Burton had a little to say as well. Burton and I had often wondered why you didn't show up somewhere or other at cricket. We always thought we might discover you sooner or later that way. You see, Burton used to say you had cricket fever, and that sooner or later the temptation would be too much. Well, when we did find you, we realized that we'd got to act quickly. Fortunately, this match was coming off, so my father got the County secretary to get you—while the fever was strong."

Once again he paused. Whitaker was ruminating soberly as he walked.

"There's another thing," said Somerville, at last. "My father means to get you out of that office you're in."

"I'm out of it, thanks," said Whitaker.

"What are you going to do, then?"

Whitaker explained.

"That's just what my father wants to see you

about. I've got a top-hole job, and we want to show a bit of our—gratitude to you by getting you one, too. My father knows a man who'll do it. You'll be able to play cricket all the season."

"W—what job is it, then?" said Whitaker, all agape.

"Private secretary," said the other.

After a while he glanced at Whitaker. Whitaker was standing perfectly still looking glassily into the distance, and a slight smile was playing about his lips, giving his solemn countenance the air of a shipwrecked mariner who sights a sail.

Whitaker had taken centre, and now he stood waiting for his first ball with a grateful heart and eyes that were brightly a-shine.

The little man in the long white coat had come as a complete surprise. Whitaker had not even known that he was there; yet he had stepped gently into the picture just as before, and now he stood at the other wicket watching Whitaker as he took up his stand. Just as he had used to stand in those halcyon days at school. It was like a page in a book, blown back by the breeze for him to read again.

At last the bowler had commenced his run; his arm was whirling; then the ball was hanging in the air, so it seemed, just within reach. Whitaker loosened his shoulders and swung out to a powerful drive. The ball was asking to be hit. He met it nicely with the thick of his bat and kept it low on the ground, saw it shooting between mid-on and a mar in the country, and so he ran.

Afterwards balls came at him in every guise; long hops and leg-breaks, balls that shot up and tried to bite his face, tempting lobs, and off-breaks that skidded as they rose. He met them all with consummate grace and despotic strength of purpose. No loose ball passed him. No good ball beat his bat. He began to hit harder and harder and with a greater freedom. Fifty came within sight. He could have burst into song. Assuredly he would get his place in the County side.

And then the thing he had half-expected came to pass. The bowlers were being changed. Somerville was coming on against him.

All at once a sudden change came into his being. Self-confidence was his at last. He watched Somerville take the ball and Burton come to the wicket to give him a new guard, and he knew what their thoughts must be; but he had no shadow of fear at all. His trouble had always been a kind of superstition. Because that one ball had won peculiar success against him at the nets when first he had met it, his nerve had given way in a school match; the same thing had happened in the game against the M.C.C. But he knew now what he had done wrong. His mind had always given way to the magic of that ball. It had hypnotized him. He had beaten himself. Now it was different. He did not know why; he was unconscious of any special change in himself, yet his whole world had suddenly become one sunny garden; every sound was a happy song. He had never been so happy in his life before, and he had confidence.

Somerville stood at the wicket fumbling with the ball, and his mind was torn with doubt. His keen desire was to repay Whitaker for the great thing he had done for him. Could he best repay by bowling an easy ball and thus helping him to his fifty? He believed not. For one thing Whitaker would see through such a deception and be offended. For another it would not be cricket. Whatever happened now Whitaker would play for the County. He had made forty-eight. It was up to Somerville to try and bowl him out. He went to his mark and turned.

Whitaker did not so much as move a muscle of his face. He looked up the pitch. He saw a little man swathed in a long white coat, the tails of which lay upon the vivid green of the grass behind him. He saw Somerville marking with his heel the spot from which he was going to bowl. Finally he saw the great gasometers, the only sign of the passing of the years; and he knew instinctively what was going to happen.

Somerville commenced his run; his arm swung, and the red ball left the grasp of those wiry fingers and came at him temptingly. It was Somerville's best ball. Whitaker lifted his bat, half turned to leg. He knew just how it would pitch and curl in between his bat and his legs if he let it; but he chose the psychological moment, and as it pitched his bat swung with every atom of his strength and lifted the ball to a terrific height and hard into the distance. For a second he stood watching it go with a happy smile. Then his partner was coming down the pitch and calling to him, and he collected his thoughts and ran. He turned for the second run and tried to discern the ball. It had not yet fallen; a fielder was running vexedly towards it, far out of reach. For a moment it seemed to hang in the air, then began to drop, and the game stood still whilst from every corner heads were craned for a sight of it falling.

At last in the distance a tram came into sight and stopped abruptly—there came a moment's pause—a boy was running down the road—he had picked it up.

Whitaker turned his head and looked at Somerville. Somerville was stiff with astonishment. Never before had he ever been hit out of the ground.

The little man in the long white coat stood like a graven image, staring down the pitch, and Whitaker caught his eye. He spoke no word, but the look was enough. The little man had understood.

"Would you mind telling me," said the Important Man, "under which name you would like to play when you turn out for the County next week? Shall it be Wade?"

Whitaker looked at him awkwardly.

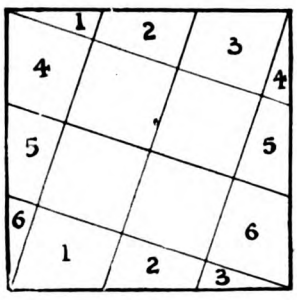
"Oh," said he. "Well, I hardly—perhaps—hadn't it better be Whitaker?"

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

471.—TESSELLATED PAVEMENTS.

READERS must often have noticed, in looking at tessellated pavements and elsewhere, that a square space has sometimes to be filled with square tiles under such conditions that a certain number of the contributory tiles have to be cut in two parts. Thus a familiar example is shown in our illustration, where a square has been formed with ten square tiles. As ten is not a square number a certain number of tiles must be cut. In this case it is six. It will be seen that the pieces 1 and 1 are cut from one tile, 2 and 2 from another, and so on. Now, if you had to cover a square space with exactly twenty-nine square tiles of equal size, how would you do it? What is the smallest number of tiles that you need cut in two parts? This would perplex many intelligent workmen in actual practice.

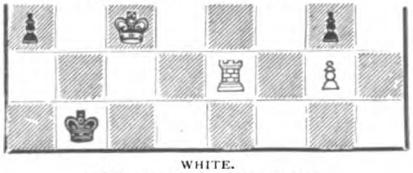


472.—HALLAM'S ENIGMA.

So much interest seems to have been taken in the "unsolved enigmas" which I have given that I present another that has been sent to me over and over again. It is said to be by Hallam, but I have never hit on an answer. Perhaps our readers can suggest something.

I sit on a rock when I'm raising the wind,
But the storm once abated, I'm gentle and kind.
I've kings at my feet who await but my nod
To kneel in the dust on the ground I have trod.
I'm seen to the world, but known to but few,
Detested by Gentiles, I'm pork to the Jew.
I never have passed but one night in the dark,
And that was with Noah alone in the Ark.
My weight is three pounds, my length is a mile,
And when I'm discovered you'll say with a smile
That my first and my last are the pride of this isle.

473.—MATE IN THREE.



WHITE.
White mates in three moves.

IT is curious how sometimes the most elementary positions in chess will perplex. How many minutes will it take the reader to solve this little mate in three by E. B. Cook? The upper part of the board is omitted merely to save space.

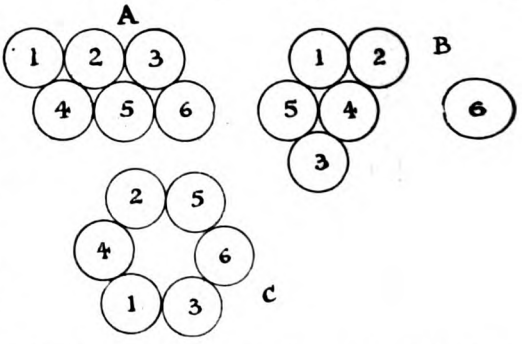
474.—THE TWO FOURS.

A LARGE number of correspondents have written to me about the old problem of "The Four Fours" since I gave it (No. 420). Of course, it is necessary to discover which numbers can be formed with one four, with two fours, and with three fours, and to record these for combination as required. It is a failure to find some of these that leads to so much difficulty. For example, I think very few ever discover that 64 can be expressed with only two fours. Can you do it? The only signs allowed are those of addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, brackets, square root, decimal points (legitimately used), and factorial $\lfloor 4$, which is equal to $1 \times 2 \times 3 \times 4$, or 24. It is a fascinating but bewildering puzzle.

Solutions to last Month's Puzzles.

467.—THE SIX PENNIES.

FIRST arrange the pennies as in Diagram A. Then carefully shift 5 and 3 and get position B. Finally



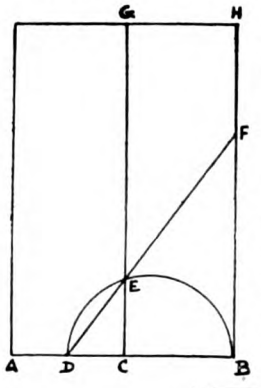
place 1 against the 3 and 4 and move 3 and 5 to their positions in C. Nos. 2, 4, and 6 have never been moved since they were placed in position in A.

468.—SIR WALTER SCOTT'S ENIGMA.

THE best answer I have been able to find is GOOD NIGHT. The two syllables are by way of wish or prayer. We wish nothing but *good* to the victorious, we leave those who have fallen to their "dewy shroud" at *night*, while to the sorrowful bereaved we cannot do less than wish them a *good night*.

469.—A CREASE PROBLEM.

BISECT A B in C and draw the line C G, parallel to B H. Then bisect A C in D and draw the semicircle D B, cutting the line C G in E. Now the line D E F gives the direction of the shortest possible crease under the conditions.



470.—A MONEY PUZZLE.

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A MOST AMUSING STORY by

P. G. WODEHOUSE

DEC 15 1919

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and Chills.
See Page 22

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

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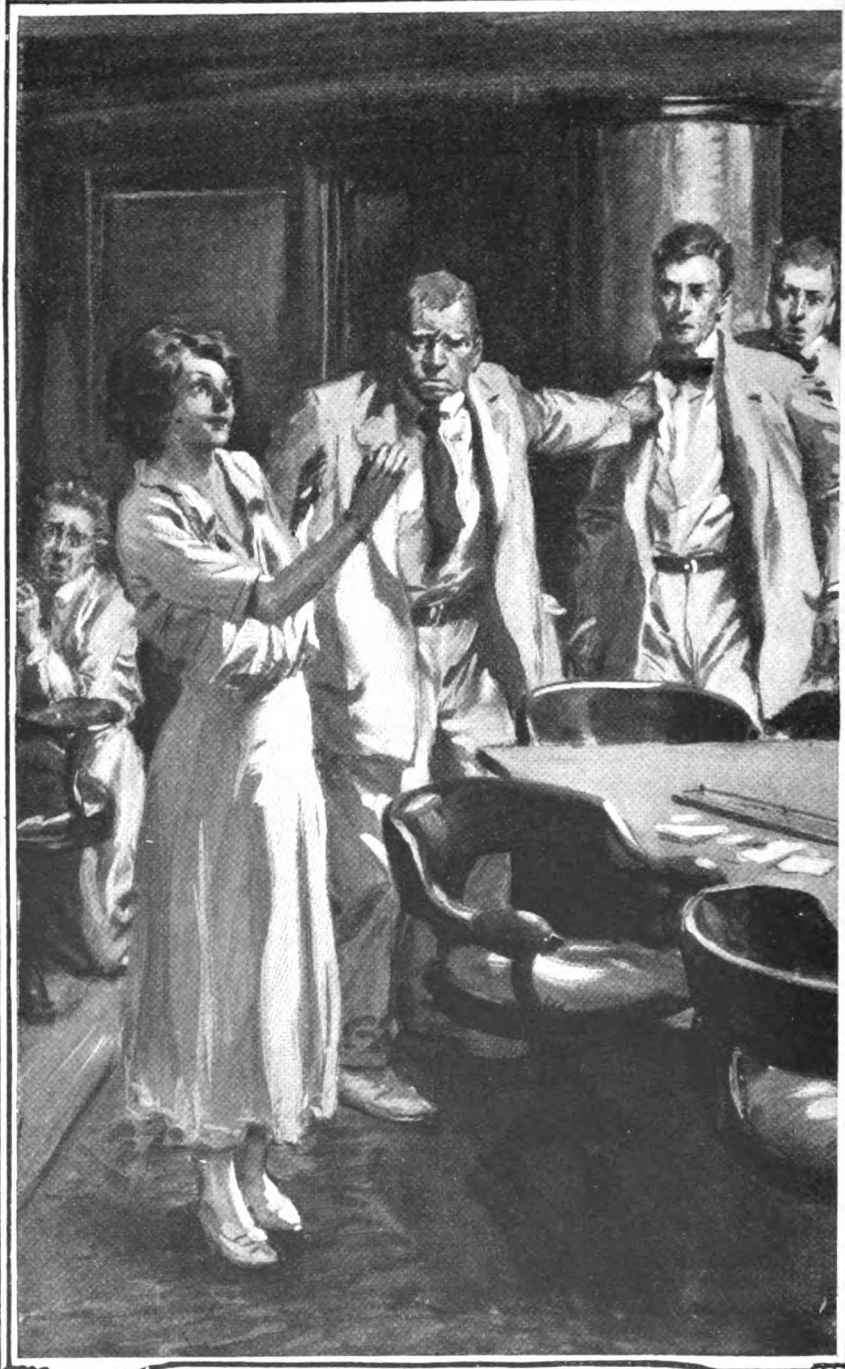

"STAND ASIDE! IF IT'S THE DEVIL HIMSELF THAT'S GOT HER—LET HER TALK!"

(See Page 310.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Vol. 58. OCTOBER, 1919. No. 346.

Buried Treasure

by F. BRITTEN AUSTIN

ILLUSTRATED BY W. R. S. STOTT. R. I.

FOR the last twenty minutes the after-dinner talk of the little group of men in the liner's smoking-room had revelled in the uncanny. One man had started it, rather diffidently, with a strange yarn. Another had capped it. Then, no longer restrained by the fear of a humiliating scepticism in their audience, they gave themselves up to that mysteriously satisfying enjoyment of the inexplicably marvellous, vying with each other in stories which, as they were narrated, were, no doubt more or less unconsciously, modified to suit the argument, but which one and all dealt with experience that in the ultimate analysis could not be explained by the normal how and why of everyday life.

"What do you think of all this, doctor?" said one of the storytellers, turning suddenly to a keen-eyed, elderly man who had been listening in silence. "As a specialist in mental disorders you must have had a vast experience of delusions of every kind. Is there any truth in all this business of spiritualism, automatic writing, reincarnation, and the rest of it? What's the scientific reason for it all?—for some reason there must be! People don't tell all these stories just for fun."

The doctor shifted his pipe in his mouth and smiled, his eyes twinkling.

"You seem to find a certain amount of amusement in it," he remarked, dryly. "The scientific reasons you ask for so easily are highly controversial. But many of the phenomena are undoubtedly genuine—automatic writing, for instance. It is a fact that people of a certain type find their hand can write, entirely independent of their conscious attention, coherent sentences whose meaning is utterly strange to them. They need not even deliberately make their mind a blank. They may be surprised by their hand suddenly writing on its own initiative when their consciousness is fixed upon some other occupation, such as entering up an account-book. Always they have a vivid feeling that not their own but another distinctly separate intelligence guides the pen. This feeling is not evidence, of course. It may be an illusion; probably is.

"The best-analysed reincarnation story is probably that dealt with by Professor Flournoy in his study of the famous medium Hélène Smith of Geneva. This lady sincerely believed herself to be a reincarnation of Marie Antoinette—and in her trance-state she acted the part with astonishing fidelity and dramatic power. In her normal condition she certainly possessed neither so much detailed knowledge of the life of the ill-fated queen nor so much histrionic ability. She also wrote automatically, and some of her productions were amazing, to say the least of them. Well, Professor Flournoy's psychological investigations proved clearly to my thinking that it was a case of her subconscious mind dramatizing, with that wonderful faculty of impersonation which characterises it, a few hints accidentally dropped into it and combining with her subconscious memory, which forgets nothing it has ever heard or read or even casually glanced at, to produce an almost perfect representation of Marie Antoinette. Also he proved that her automatic writing emanated

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from her own subconscious mind and nowhere else.

"Now, I am not going to say that discarnate spirits do not communicate through this subconscious activity of which one form is automatic writing. I am not going to say that we do not become reincarnated through an endless cycle of lives. I do not know enough about it to assert such a negative—no one does. All I know about the human mind is that we know very little about it. It is like the moon, of which you never see more than the small end. Infinite possibilities lie in the shadow. You are only conscious of a small fraction of your own personality. The subconsciousness—the unillumined portion of your soul—is incomputably vast. It learns everything, forgets nothing; possibly it even goes on from life to life. When it is tapped by any of those traditional means which nowadays we call spiritualistic one may—or may not—come across buried treasure."

"But you yourself do not believe in the truth of spiritualism as an actual fact, doctor?" queried one of the group, a trace of aggression in his tone.

The doctor shrugged his shoulders.

"I accord *belief* to a very limited number of attested facts, my friend," he said. "That I am sitting here with you, for example. I am ready to adopt provisionally all sorts of hypotheses to explain those varied phenomena of life, the ultimate explanation of which must in any case elude me. They are hypotheses for myself—I do not announce them as dogmas for others. But—if you do not think it is too late—I will tell you a story, a rather queer experience of my own, and you can form your own hypotheses in explanation of it."

There was a chorus of approval. The doctor waited while the steward refilled the glasses at the instance of one of the group, re-lit his pipe, and settled himself to begin.

It was in 1883. I was a young man. I had recently finished walking the hospitals, got my degree, and before settling down into practice at home had decided to see a little of the world. So I signed on for a few voyages as a ship's doctor. At the termination of one of them I found myself at a loose end in New York. There I became friendly with the son of a man who in his young days had been a Californian "Forty-niner," had made a pile, settled East, become a railroad speculator and made millions—William Vandermeulen.

Old Vandermeulen had a delicate daughter, Pauline, then about nineteen years of age and in the incipient stages of consumption. Under medical advice, he was accustomed to take her each winter for a cruise around the West Indies in his steam yacht. That year, young Geoffrey Vandermeulen persuaded his father to ship me as medical officer. There was nothing alarming in the young girl's condition, of course, or a much older and more experienced man would have accompanied them. She was merely delicate.

We were a small party on board: the old man, his wife—a faded old lady with no personality whatever—Pauline, Geoffrey, and myself. Geoffrey was an ordinary, high-spirited young man, intelligent and a pleasant companion, but not particularly remarkable. His sister was mildly pretty but utterly devoid of attractiveness, extremely shy, and given to sitting in blank reverie over a book. Although she always had one in her hand, she read, as a matter of fact, very little. It was just an excuse for day-dreaming. Of this girl the old man, otherwise as keen as a razor and as hard as nails—commercially, I believe, he was little better than a pirate—was inordinately fond. Outside business, she was the absorbing passion of his life. There was no whim of hers that he would not gratify. It was rather pathetic to see that old scoundrel hanging over her frail innocence, all that he had of idealism centred in her threatened life.

The cruise was pleasant but uneventful enough for some weeks. We pottered down through the Bahamas to Jamaica and then turned eastward with intent to visit the various ports of the Antilles as far south as Barbados.

It was one evening while we were chugging peacefully across the Caribbean Sea that occurred the first of the remarkable incidents which made this voyage so memorable to me. I remember the setting of it perfectly. We were all in the saloon; I suppose because the night was for some reason unpleasant. The weather was calm, at any rate. Geoffrey and I were reading. Old Vandermeulen and his wife were playing cribbage. Pauline was sitting at a writing-table fixed in a corner of the saloon, entering up the day's trivial happenings in the diary which she religiously kept. I remember glancing at her and noticing that she was chewing the nail of her left thumb—a habit of which I was vainly trying to break her—as she stared vacantly at the bulkhead, no doubt ransacking her memory for some incident to record.

Suddenly she turned round upon us with a startled cry.

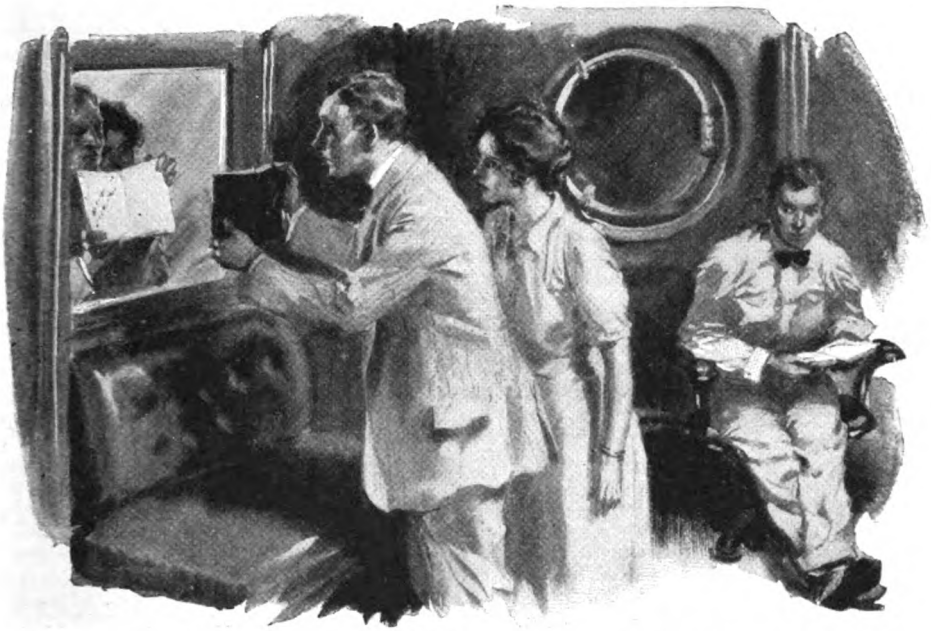
"Look, mamma! I have scrawled all over my diary without knowing that I did it! Isn't that strange!"

We all of us looked up languidly. The mother made some banal remark, but did not withdraw her attention from her cards. The father glanced affectionately towards her without ceasing to count up the score he was about to peg on the board. Geoffrey and I continued our reading.

But the girl had been puzzling over the scrawl, and all at once she jumped up from her seat and came across to us.

"Look!" she said. "Isn't it funny? These words—they're all like the words on blotting-paper—they go backwards and inside out! And there are figures, too! Whatever could have made me do it? And I don't remember doing it, either, though, of course, I must have done. There was nothing on that page a minute before, I am sure of it!"

There was something curiously uneasy in the girl's manner, a note in her voice that



"ALMOST WITHOUT THINKING, I HELD THE OPEN PAGE AGAINST ONE OF THE MIRRORS—AND I COULD NOT REPRESS A CRY OF ASTONISHMENT."

impressed me. I got up, took the open diary from her hand, and there, sure enough, was a large uneven scrawl, two lines of it, diagonally across the page, and, as she said, reversed, as though it had been blotted down upon it.

Almost without thinking, I held the open page against one of the mirrors panelled in the saloon wall—and I could not repress a cry of astonishment. The scrawl was a decipherable sentence, mysterious enough, but coherent! I'll write it down for you as nearly as I remember it, so as to show you how it looked. (He produced pencil and paper from his pocket, wrote: "*lucia* 1324 *N* 8127 *W katalina sculle point SWbS* 3 *trees digge jno dawson youre turne.*")

"There you are—the last two words were added like a postscript and were followed by a rough sketch, an irregular oval over a St. Andrew's Cross, like this :—

I read out what was written, and Pauline stared at me wide-eyed.

"Whatever could have made me write that?" she exclaimed.

Geoffrey looked up, fraternally scornful.

"It's a thin joke, Pauline! You can't monkey us in that fashion! I suppose you want to pretend that the ghost of some old pirate wrote it down in your book so as to start us off on a Treasure Island hunt?" Stevenson's romance was then in its first success and Geoffrey had just been reading it. "Of course, you wrote it deliberately—what nonsense!"

She turned round upon him, her eyes filling with tears in the vehemence of her protest.

"Geoffrey, I couldn't! I couldn't write reversed like that if I tried!"

"Oh, yes, you could," asserted Geoffrey, confidently. "It's easy enough."

"Supposing we all try," said I, curious to test its feasibility. I felt considerably puzzled. Pauline was not at all the sort of girl one would expect to persist in such a pointless sort of practical joke as this, and persistent she was—tearful like a child unjustly accused of a crime of which it protests innocence.

Her mother and father renounced their game of cribbage and bent their heads together over the enigmatic screed, without proffering an opinion. It was evident that they did not wish to hurt their daughter's feelings by open scepticism. They would have humoured her in anything, no matter how absurd.

I reiterated my suggestion and it was accepted in the spirit of a parlour-game. A line from a book was selected, we all tried—and we all failed hopelessly. None of us got more than two or three consecutive letters right. It is not so easy as it sounds. Try it for yourselves!

At that time, although spiritualism was a

great craze in America, and D. D. Home, Eglinton, and other famous mediums were arousing enormous interest and controversy in England, automatic script was an uncommon phenomenon. Table-rapping, levitation, slate-writing, and materialization were the wonders in vogue—and I had then never heard of the "mirror-writing" which has since become a frequent form of automatic expression. Neither, of course, *à fortiori*, had the young girl who had just produced this mysterious specimen.

We all felt puzzled and impressed at our failure to imitate deliberately the reversed script. Old Vandermeulen picked up the diary and read the reflection of the scrawled page in the wall-mirror.

"Well, it's sure strange!" he said, in his twangy drawl. "Geoff! You write this down in a straight-away hand, and we'll see if we can get any sense out of it. I guess there's some meaning in it. Pauline ain't joking."

Geoffrey obeyed, and read out the script again.

"'*lucia* 1324 *N* 8127 *W katalina sculle point SWbS* 3 *trees digge jno dawson youre turne.* —It's exactly like the directions to a pirate's buried treasure, father!" he added, excitedly. "Skull and crossbones and all! But, of course, that's ridiculous! Though I can't understand how Pauline could have written it like she did!"

"And I did not know even that I was writing!" asseverated Pauline, "let alone know what I wrote! It was just as if my hand did not belong to me—it was a sort of numbness that made me look down."

"Tear it up, dear!" implored her mother, anxiously. "I am sure it comes from the Devil!" Mrs. Vandermeulen belonged to a particularly strict little sect and was always ready to discern the immediate agency of the Evil One.

"Devil or not!" said old Vandermeulen, "I guess if there's any buried treasure lying around here, I'm going to peg out my claim on it." He turned to me. "Young man, was there ever any pirates about these parts?" The old ruffian was quite illiterate; had never, I believe, read a book in his life.

"Why, yes," I replied, "from the end of the sixteenth century these seas were the chief haunt of the buccaneers, and after them of the pirates, who were not entirely suppressed until well in the eighteenth century. There must be any amount of their hidden treasure buried in these islands."

"You don't say!" he exclaimed, his avaricious old eyes lighting up. "And here have I been running this yacht up and down these parts for five years at a dead loss!" His disgust would have been comic were it not for the ugly, ruthless lust of gold which looked suddenly out of his face. "Guess I'm going to quit this fooling around right away! I don't know and don't care if it was the Devil himself wrote this specification in Pauline's book—I'm darned sure she didn't write it herself—the handwriting's different, d'you see?" It was, as a matter of fact, compared with the previous pages, quite another hand—hers was an upright, rounded, schoolgirl calligraphy; this was a cursive, old-fashioned script inclined well forward. "So as we've got nothing else to start upon, we may as well see if there's anything to it." He tossed Geoffrey's transcription across to me. "What do you make of it, young man?" he asked, with the sneering condescension he accorded to my superior literary attainments.

I took it, rather amused at the old scoundrel's simplicity. That there was an authentic meaning in Pauline's scrawl seemed to me wildly improbable. I was a frank materialist in those days, and had Carpenter's formula of "unconscious cerebration" glibly ready to cover up anything psychologically abnormal. However, I considered the sheet of paper with attention.

"Assuming this to be a genuine message," I said, "it would appear to give the precise latitude and longitude of some point where it is desirable to dig. I take it that the figures stand for thirteen degrees twenty-four minutes North, eighty-one degrees twenty-seven minutes West. The word '*lucia*' puzzles me—unless the island of St. Lucia is meant. What '*katalina*' stands for, I do not know—it is evidently a proper name of some kind. '*Sculle point SWbS* 3 *trees digge*' presumably means that one should dig under three trees south-west-by-south of Skull Point—wherever that is. '*jno dawson*' is, of course, John Dawson. Assuming this to be a spirit-message from the other world"—I could not help smiling ironically—"it is possibly the name of the ghost who is communicating—and who desires to indicate to some person that it is his or her turn. He does not specify for what. I may remark that the ghost is either ill-educated or he has an archaic taste in spelling."

"I don't like it," said Mrs. Vandermeulen, querulously timid. "Do tear it up, William! I am sure harm will come of it! It is the Devil tempting you!"

"So long as he's serious, he can tempt me sure easy!" said the old ruffian in a tone of cool blasphemy, which sent the colour out of his wife's face. He rang the bell and the negro-steward appeared. "Sam! Ask Captain Higgins to step in here for a moment!"

Captain Higgins, the skipper of the yacht, was a level-headed mariner of middle-age, whom nothing ever ruffled. He was competence itself.

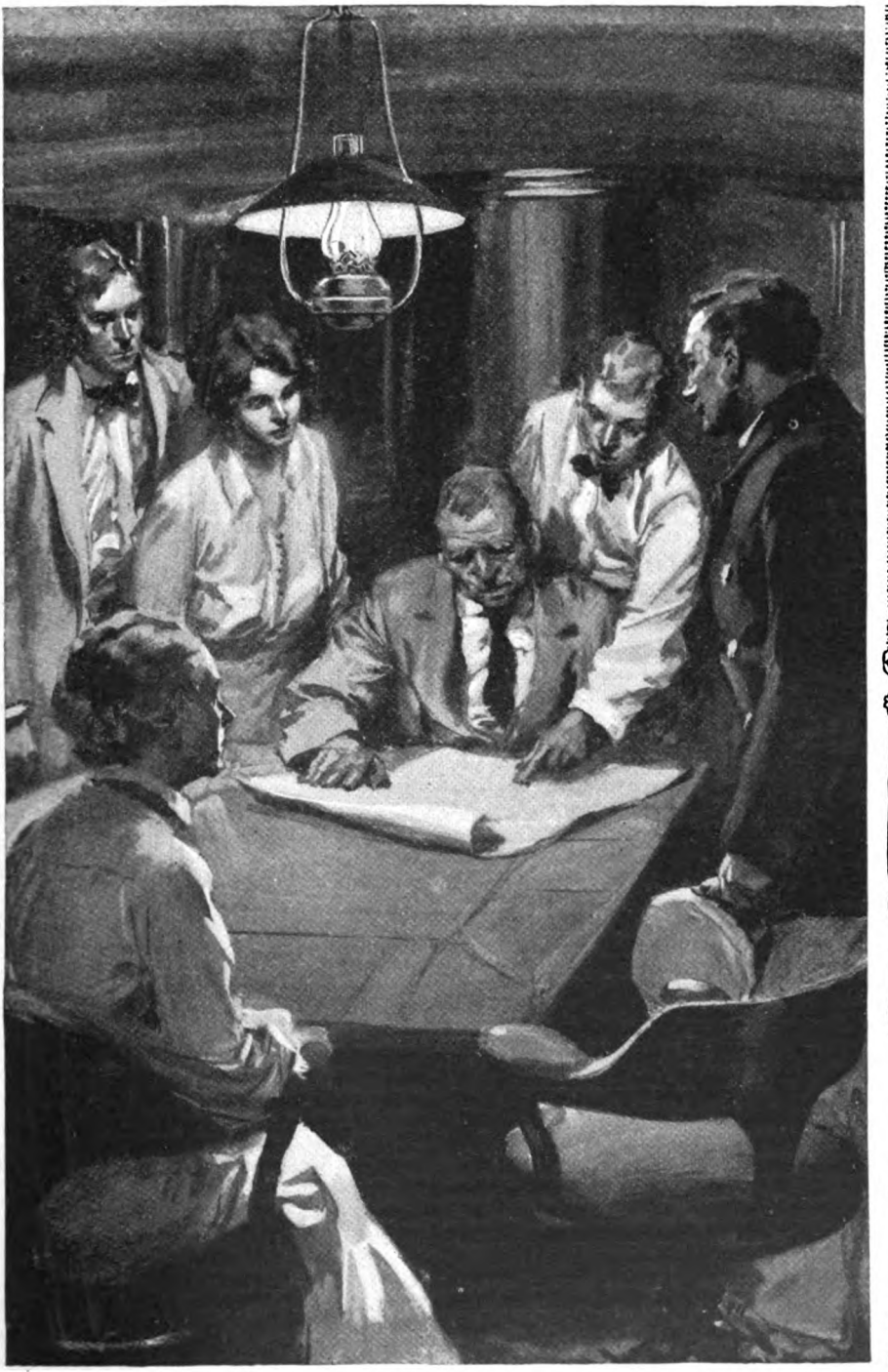
"Good evening, Captain Higgins," said old Vandermeulen, fixing him with the keen eyes under shaggy grey brows, eyes which defied you to divine his purpose whilst they probed yours. "What's the latitude and longitude of the island of St. Lucia?"

"Fourteen North, sixty-one West," replied Captain Higgins, promptly.

Old Vandermeulen turned to me.

"Then it's not St. Lucia, young man," he said. He picked up Geoffrey's transcription. "Well, now, Captain Higgins, is there any place thirteen-twenty-four North, eighty-one-twenty-seven West?"

The skipper reflected for a moment.



"'LOOK!' CRIED GEOFFREY. 'THERE'S YOUR KATALINA! MY HAT! THAT IS WEIRD!'"

"No place of importance, certainly. I'll get the chart."

He returned with it, spread it out on the saloon table, ran his forefinger across it.

"Here you are!" he said. "A small island called Old Providence. It belongs to Colombia."

Geoffrey, who was peering over his shoulder, uttered a startled exclamation.

"And look!" he cried. "There's your Katalina!" He pointed to a small islet just north of Old Providence, a mere dot on the chart. "Santa Katalina! My hat! that is weird!"

It certainly was. From whatever stratum of Pauline's consciousness her writing had emanated, it was an amazing thing that she should have written down the exact latitude and longitude of a tiny island off the Nicaraguan coast and named it correctly. Even I could not help feeling that it was more than a fortuitous coincidence, that it was uncanny. The others surrendered themselves straight away.

I turned to look at Pauline. She was deathly white; evidently frightened at being made the vehicle of this message from the Beyond. Her mother clutched at her, as though protecting her from unseen dangers. Geoffrey's imagination had caught fire, his eyes were bright with excitement.

"My sakes, Pauline!" he cried. "I believe you now! You couldn't have written that out of your head. I've read of things like this before—I guess you're a medium and didn't know it! Father! We'll track this message down, wherever it comes from, say now?"

"It comes from the Devil! Tear it up—oh, tear it up!" implored Mrs. Vandermeulen. "William! Tear it up—don't follow it!"

Old Vandermeulen turned to the skipper. His jaw had set hard, his lips were compressed, only the glitter in his eyes, peering in a momentary fixation of thought from under his bent brows, showed that he shared the excitement of his son. So he must have looked in his office when he took the decisions which had made his millions.

"Captain Higgins," he said, curtly ignoring the supplications of his wife, "how long will it take us to reach that island?"

The skipper put his finger on the chart at a point south of Haiti.

"We're here," he said. He measured off the distance. "At our best rate of twelve knots—about sixty hours' steaming."

The old man nodded.

"Put her about," he said. His harsh tone had an odd ring about it—as though he were secretly conscious of affronting mysterious dangers, was all the more emphatic. "Right now!"

Captain Higgins never queried owners' orders.

"Very good, sir," he replied, stolidly, and walked out of the cabin.

A minute or two later we felt the yacht swing round. There is always something impressive when a ship on the open sea goes about upon her course, but I never felt it more powerfully than then. It seemed that there was a fateful significance in our deliberate action.

Geoffrey meanwhile was poring over the sheet of paper on which he had transcribed his sister's reversed scrawl.

"It's all perfectly clear," he said, triumphantly. "We've got to make this island of Santa Katalina, thirteen-twenty-four North, eighty-one-twenty-seven West, try and find a place called Skull Point, look for three trees south-west-by-south of it, and dig! We understand every word of it now!"

"All except the word '*lucia*,'" I corrected, "and whose turn it is."

"Yes—there's that," he said, dubiously. "I suppose every word has some meaning."

"You can bet it has!" I replied, half sarcastically humouring his credulity, half-surrendering myself to an uncritical acceptation of these mysteriously given directions. "I wonder who this John Dawson was—if he existed?"

"He's a sure-enough ghost of some old pirate!" said Vandermeulen, with complete conviction. "And I guess he's putting us fair and good on to his pile!"

I laughed, involuntarily, at this childishness. The old man frowned.

"There's some things that perhaps even you all-fired clever young fellows don't know," he said, crushingly. "'Tain't the first time I've heard of this sort of thing. A mate of mine in the old days at 'Frisco was waked up one morning by the ghost of a prospector who'd died up in the ranges. He told him just where he'd made his strike before his grub gave out. My mate had never heard of the place, but he lit straight away on the trail—and, sure enough, the ghost was telling truth. Old Jim Hamilton it was—and he drank himself to death on what he got out of it." The old man looked me straight in the eyes as though challenging me to doubt him. Of course, I could say nothing. He grunted scornfully, and turned again to the chart still spread out upon the table. "It's a nice, quiet, out-of-the-way place," reflected the old ruffian, putting his thumbnail on the lonely island. "Just the location for a *cache*—guess they'd feel pretty sure of not being interfered with there!" There was a grim undertone in his voice which was decidedly ugly. He might, himself, have been the reincarnation of just such a pirate as the one whose existence he was postulating.

Well, nothing more happened that night. Mrs. Vandermeulen, thoroughly alarmed and uneasy, hustled her daughter off to bed. Old Vandermeulen and his son sat up in an endless discussion of the mysterious script, referring again and again to the chart which so startlingly confirmed its indications, and speculating optimistically as to the nature and amount of the treasure they were convinced was buried in the designated place. They talked themselves into a complete faith in the supernatural origin of the message, and, father and son alike—it was curious to note the traits of resemblance which cropped out in them—were equally indifferent as to whether its source was diabolic or benevolent. Enormously wealthy although

they already were, the prospect of this phantom gold waiting to be unearthed had completely fascinated them. At last I turned in, wearied with the thousand and one questions they asked me and to which I could give no answer, disgusted with their avarice, and scornfully contemptuous of their simplicity.

I found sleep no easy matter. Sceptical though I was, I could not get Pauline's curious production out of my head, and the more I thought of it the more inexplicable seemed its coincidence with the chart. The subconscious mind, with its amazing memory, its dramatic faculty, its unexpected invasion of the surface consciousness in certain types, was not then the commonplace of psychology that it is now—or I should probably have referred the whole thing to the combination of a casual, apparently unheeding glance at the chart with a memory of some of her brother's remarks about "Treasure Island," automatically and dramatically reproduced. As it was, I could formulate no explanation that satisfied me—though I utterly disbelieved in the ghost of a piratical John Dawson, of which the two Vandermeulens were now fully persuaded.

The next day found us steaming steadily westward. Father and son could talk of nothing else but their fancied buried treasure and their plans for digging it up without taking the crew of the yacht into their confidence. Mrs. Vandermeulen hovered round her daughter, horribly anxious of she knew not what, but—after having been once silenced by a peremptory oath from her husband—afraid to make further protest. Pauline herself sat all day in a deck-chair, more silent even than usual, staring dreamily across the empty sea in a reverie which ignored us all. Naturally, I watched her closely. But, except that her eyes had a kind of haunting fear in them, she seemed perfectly normal. Evidently the occurrence of the previous night had shocked her profoundly, for once, when I casually mentioned it, she shuddered and implored me not to speak of it again. The fear of the uncanny in herself stared out of her eyes as she entreated me.

This dreamy absorption in herself continued until supper-time that evening. Throughout the meal I do not think she uttered a single word. She seemed not even to hear the conversation around her, but toyed listlessly with her food and finally ceased to eat long before the others had finished. Watching her with a professionally-interested observation, I was uneasy. She had leaned back in her chair, was gazing straight before her with wide-open eyes. Suddenly I noticed that they had glazed over. All expression faded out of her face. The arm that rested on the saloon table stiffened into a cataleptic sort of rigidity.

Her mother was also anxiously watching her.

"Pauline!" she cried. "Are you ill?"

There was no answer. The girl sat like a statue. Mrs. Vandermeulen glanced at me in wild alarm, silently imploring my intervention. Old Vandermeulen and his son were hotly arguing the desirability or otherwise of informing Captain Higgins of their plans, and took no notice of us.

I got up from my seat and went round the table to the girl. I lifted up her lifelessly heavy arm, with my fingers on her pulse. It was normal.

"Miss Vandermeulen!" I said, rather sharply. "Are you not well?"

She turned her head slowly round to me, like a sleep-walker faintly aware of some sound that does not, however, wake her, and stared me full in the face with eyes in which there was not the slightest glimmer of recognition.

"Pauline!" almost screamed her mother. "Don't you know your own name?"

An expression of curious intelligence dawned into her face—her aspect changed in some subtle manner, as though another, quite different, personality was emerging in her—she laughed in low, confident tones, utterly unlike her ordinary laugh.

"My name is Lucia!" she said, as though stating a well-known fact.

Lucia! To say that we were startled is to understate our astonishment—we were dumbfounded. The first word of the cryptic message! We gazed at her for a moment as at a complete stranger from the clouds—and, indeed, she looked it, as she smiled at us with bright, malicious eyes. The diffident Pauline we knew had completely disappeared.

"She is possessed!" screamed her mother. "Oh, God!—restore her! Restore her!"

The girl stood up suddenly from her chair, passed her hand over her eyes, shook herself as though shaking off sleep. She turned away from us deliberately.

"Oh, John!" she said, and there was an odd little foreign accent in her tone; "I have dreamed—such a strange dream! I dreamed—I know not!—that I was not Lucia!" She laughed softly in her new low tones. "That strange people were asking me my name. Then I woke—oh, John!" she sidled up in a wheedling manner to what, so far as we could see, was vacant space. "I am Lucia, am I not? And you love me? You love me?" Her shoulders moved sinuously as though she were putting herself under the caresses of a person invisible to us. "You love me—and I love you, although you have only that one terrible eye!" She still spoke with that curious foreign accent which lent a certain piquancy to her speech. "You love me, you John Dawson, you Englishman, you love me for ever, say?" She reminded me of Carmen sidling up to Don José. "You not deceive me—or——!" She looked up as into a tall man's face with a sudden expression of feline vindictiveness, her white teeth showing in an ugly little rictus of the mouth, and slid her hand down stealthily towards her stocking. "But, no!" She smiled; her hand came up again as though to rest upon a man's shoulder. "You love me—and I love you—and"—her voice dropped—"when we have killed the others we go away with the treasure—you promise me, John Dawson?"

She appeared utterly unaware of our presence.

There was a dramatic intensity in her voice and gestures which thrilled even me, although I had attended some hypnotic experiments in London and was aware of the complete realism with which a somnambulist will play a part suggested to him. I had no doubt whatever that she was in a state of hypnosis, accidentally self-induced, and that she was merely acting on the suggestions of the talk she had overheard.

Her mother, however, had no such consoling certitude. She hid her face in her hands, groaning: "She is possessed! She is possessed! Oh, God, cast out the evil spirit! Cast out the evil spirit!"

Geoffrey was white to the lips, appalled, unable to utter a sound. The old man stared at her, fascinated, a strange gleam in his eyes.

The mother turned to me in despair.

"Oh, doctor! Do something—do something! Oh, if only we had a minister here! She is possessed by an evil spirit! My Pauline! My Pauline!" She sank on her knees by one of the swivel-chairs, gave herself up to agonized prayer. "Oh, God, cast out the Evil One! Oh, God, cast out the Evil One!"

Thinking that this strange incident had already lasted more than long enough, I took a step towards the girl with a vague idea (though I didn't quite know how) of breaking the hypnosis. She stood looking upward still, with a wheedling, diabolical smile, into apparent nothingness.

"We will go together—we two—with the treasure, say, John Dawson?" she murmured, seductively, the very incarnation of a Delilah. "Mansvelt is dead—we will run away from Simon and go with my people before they kill us all—they are very many, and you can only hold out two-three days—but we must take the treasure, John Dawson, the treasure you and Simon hid with Mansvelt—Simon, we will kill him—and we will go away and be rich—rich, John Dawson—say?" Her voice was perfidiously honeyed, her eyes glistened, as she caressed that uncanny empty air.

"What is she talking about?" muttered Geoffrey, in a low, excited voice. "Who are these people—Mansvelt and Simon? Have you heard of them, doctor?"

I shook my head. They were utterly unknown to me. For a moment I hesitated, fascinated by the little drama, curious to hear more.

The mother moaned.

"Oh, do something, doctor! Do something! Save her! Save her! Oh, God, deliver her from the Evil One!"

Her agony recalled me to my professional duty. I started forward, but before I could reach her I was snatched back by a violent hand on my shoulder.

"Stand aside!" commanded old Vandermeulen, in a terrible voice. "Evil spirit or no evil spirit, I guess it knows all about that treasure—and I'm going to hear what it's got to say!" Of his normal love for his daughter, there was not a trace. The man was completely dominated, to the exclusion of any other sentiment, by the lust for gold, more gold. He looked scarcely human as his eyes glowered upon me, murder in them if I thwarted him. "If it's the Devil himself that's got her—let her talk!"

But the mother sprang up with a wild shriek, and rushed towards her daughter.

"Do you wish her eternal damnation?" she cried, flinging her arms about the girl. "Pauline! Pauline! For the love of God, don't you know me? Oh, say a prayer—say a prayer after me!" She commenced the Lord's Prayer in a voice that trembled with anguish.

The girl stood rigid in her embrace, drawn up away from her, looking down upon her with fixed and hostile eyes. She made one instinctive movement to escape—and then suddenly crumpled into a swoon upon the floor.

She came round easily enough under simple restoratives, looked up at us with childish, bewildered eyes—the old Pauline again! Her mother completely broke down over her, sobbing in almost crazy joy at her restoration. Emotionally infected, perhaps, the girl also gave way to a hysterical passion of weeping, which would not be checked, and for which she could give no reason. She seemed not to have the slightest recollection of the part she had just played. Old Vandermeulen, still obsessed by his lust for the treasure, tried to question her. She only stared at him dumbly—a vague fear coming into her eyes, but giving no response. I silenced him with all the authority of my professional position, and got the girl into her stateroom, where we left her with her mother.

Throughout the next day neither of the two women appeared. Pauline was utterly prostrated, and she remained in bed. Her mother stayed with her, under strict injunctions to mention nothing of last night's terrible scene.

Meanwhile, of course, we were steadily drawing nearer to the Nicaraguan coast and the island of Old Providence with its tiny and, to us, fascinating satellite, Santa Katalina. Even I could not help wondering what we should find there. The two Vandermeulens were in a fever of excitement, cursing at every moment the slowness of the yacht. We were, as a matter of fact, due to reach the island early next morning.

Some time in the afternoon the old man approached me confidentially.

"Say, young know-all," he said, "what d'you figure out was the meaning of last night's gaff? I guess Pauline ain't got no natural talent for play-acting like that."

Rather foolishly, I amused myself with his credulity.

"Of course," I said, concealing a smile, "it may be that in a previous existence your daughter's name was Lucia—the Spanish lady-friend of some of the buccaneers, and particularly of a certain John Dawson, who is now directing her to the treasure they buried together a few hundred years ago." I regretted my words the moment they were uttered. The man's infatuation needed no fanning from me.

"By Heaven, you've hit it!" he exclaimed.

"And she's just remembering! I guess she can lead us straight to it!"

"Don't be absurd!" I said, pettishly. "I was only joking!"

He glared at me in savage disappointment.

"You're joking with the wrong man!" he said, harshly. "Besides, it sure ain't impossible! You don't know what happens to us when we're dead, though you do think you know everything!"

"No—it's not impossible!" I conceded. "But it's improbable."

"That's your opinion," he sneered. "You know nothing about it! I've had them feelings myself—feelings that I've been to a place before when I sure know I haven't. By Jupiter, that's it! Pauline's just remembering—coming back to these old places—and she'll take us a bee-line to the *cache!*"

He strode off to impart this illuminating theory to his son, and I saw no more of them until supper-time. They were, I was sure, concerting some plan for cutting me out of a share in the treasure.

They had the furtive look of a couple of conspirators as we three, Pauline and her mother still absent, sat that night at table. Both forced themselves to exhibit a strained politeness to me which obviously concealed some treacherous design. I didn't like the atmosphere at all and was impelled to clear it.

"By the way," I remarked, casually, "I don't want a share in that treasure—I prefer to work for my living." As I had not the slightest faith in its existence, this renunciation was not difficult. "Supposing your theory to be true, it belongs to Miss Vandermeulen if it belongs to anyone."

"Sure, that's so!" agreed the old man. "It's Pauline's treasure, right enough. Ain't it, Geoffrey?"

"I guess it's no one else's," said Geoffrey, picking up the idea. "I'll see to that."

I could not help smiling at the gratuitous menace in his tone; he might have been sitting on the treasure-chests already.

At that moment we were startled by an appalling scream, a choking cry, from Pauline's stateroom.

We rushed in and stood for a moment transfixed with horror. Pauline, leaning out of her bunk, was throttling with both hands the life out of her mother, who had been sitting by the bedside. In the flash of my first perception of the scene, I saw that the girl had reverted to her trance-personality. It was Lucia who had that deadly grip upon the other woman's throat, Lucia who glared at her with fiendishly triumphant eyes, Lucia who gloated mockingly in her foreign accent: "Ah, Teresa!—You think you would take the Englishman from me—you think you would go away with John Dawson and the treasure?" She laughed, cruelly exultant. "I think no, Teresa—I think no—not with the treasure! You can go with that John Dawson, yes! But not with the treasure! You go and wait for him—for your John Dawson—I will send him to you—soon—soon!" Her low laugh was diabolical.

We flung ourselves upon her, but her strength was superhuman. She seemed utterly oblivious of us, as heedless of our struggles as though we were not there. Her eyes flashing, her teeth showing, she continued to jeer at her victim in her foreign voice. "He will come to you to-night—your John Dawson—as he promised, yes!—I will send him to you——!" Only as we finally tore the almost strangled Mrs. Vandermeulen from her hands did she suddenly cease to speak. She sank back upon the bed, swooning into complete unconsciousness.

I drove out the father and son and applied myself to reviving the mother. I shall never forget the terrible night I had with her, after she had resuscitated. At length I had to give her a few drops of laudanum to get her off to sleep. Pauline slept like a child.

I woke up the next morning to that strange feeling of hushed stillness which pervades a ship when her engines are at rest after a long period of unbroken activity. We were pitching heavily, evidently at anchor, for our upward rise was every now and then suddenly and jarringly arrested. We had arrived!

I went to look at my patients and found them both suffering from sea-sickness. This vicious plunging of the yacht was more than their weak stomachs could stand. I gave them each a steadying draught and then went on deck.

The two Vandermeulens were on the bridge with the skipper. I ignored them, instinctively avoiding their certain excitement. Upon our port bow was a fairly large island, its rocky shore crowned with a dense tropical foliage. On the other side of us was a small islet, barren save for a few sparse trees scattered over it, surf breaking white upon its beaches. Old Providence and its satellite, Santa Katalina! Between the two islands a strong current was running, with a heavy ground-swell in which we plunged and kicked, straining at our cables. No wonder the two ladies were ill, I thought, as the deck sank sickeningly sideways under my feet.

I went into the saloon and found that the Vandermeulens had already breakfasted. As I ate my solitary meal, I could hear the heavy trampling of feet on the deck overhead, and guessed that they were hoisting outboard the little steam-launch we used when in harbour.

When I had finished I went to have another look at Pauline. Her mother was with her. Mentally, she was completely her normal self, with apparently no memory even of that trance personality which had for the second time surged up in her. But she was feeling very ill in this violent and disturbing motion of the anchored yacht.

Old Vandermeulen came in.

"Get up, Pauline, and dress!" he commanded, brutally, as though bearing down opposition in advance. "We're going ashore!"

His wife sprang forward.

"Oh, no, no, William! Don't take her! Don't take her! Don't tempt Providence! Don't go! William! William!" she clung to him in supplication. "She's too ill to go! She's too ill to go, isn't she, doctor?"

The old man shook her off.

"Nonsense!" he said, roughly. Nevertheless, he turned inquiringly to me.

I considered the pros and cons dispassionately for a moment. Of course, the old lady's fears were mere superstition and did not influence me in the least.

"Well," I said, "I think that if Miss Vandermeulen feels equal to the effort of dressing, it would do her good to get away from the yacht and walk about on firm land for an hour or two."

"I should like to," said Pauline, all docility. "Besides——" she smiled, "I should like to see for myself if there is any truth in that strange writing."

Half an hour later we had, with some difficulty, stowed the ladies—for the mother insisted on coming also—in the stern-sheets of the little launch, which rose and fell dizzily under the lee of the yacht. The two Vandermeulens were amidships, ready to give instructions to the helmsman. I noticed that they had a pick and shovel on board. I sat close to Pauline. She was looking pale, but the sea-sickness was in abeyance for the moment and a touch of digitalis I had given her had stiffened her up.

We sheered off, set a course over the rolling dark-blue swell towards the islet we could see as we lifted on the waves. We had anchored rather on the Old Providence side of the channel dividing the islands, and the launch was about midway between the two when Pauline, who had been looking around her with some curiosity, uttered a sudden ejaculation.

"That's not the island!" she cried, with a gesture towards Santa Katalina. "It's the other one—the big one!" She pointed to Old Providence. Then she checked herself, a peculiar look of puzzlement in her face. "I wonder whatever made me say that!" she exclaimed. "One would think I have been here before—but I can't have."

"But that's Santa Katalina!" objected Geoffrey, pointing to the islet. It undoubtedly was.

"Wait!" said old Vandermeulen, who had been sharply watching his daughter for any sign of recognition. "I guess Pauline knows what she is talking about!"

He stopped the engine and for a few moments we rose and fell idly upon the waves, while the two men stared across to Old Providence.

"By Jove, yes!" cried Geoffrey suddenly. "Pauline's right! Look! There's Skull Point!"

He indicated, with outstretched hand, a jutting headland whose face had been weather-sculptured into the unmistakable semblance of a skull.

"Skull Point it is!" said old Vandermeulen, with such an oath as he did not usually let come to his daughter's ears.

In another moment we had gone about and were throbbing quickly towards the headland. All eyes were fixed on it as we approached. Geoffrey had produced a compass.

"Look!" he cried. "The three trees! South-west-by-south from Skull Point!"

Sure enough, in the direction designated, three enormous trees, evidently hundreds of years old, raised their heads high above the mass of more recent vegetation.

A quarter of an hour later we were running into a little cove on the west side of the headland. A ledge of rock, sheltered from the swell, offered itself as a landing-stage, and we ran alongside and made fast.

Old Vandermeulen ordered the two members of the yacht's crew, who had accompanied us, to remain in the launch. The rest of us started off into the island, Geoffrey carrying the tools. The three trees were at no great distance, at the summit of a slope of broken-down volcanic rock. Geoffrey arrived first.

"No need to worry where to dig, father!" he shouted. "Here it is—plain enough!"

Under the centre tree was a cairn of loose stones, more than half buried under the detritus of many years, it is true, but evidently the work of men's hands.

"That's it, sure!" cried the old man. "First time you've seen this place, Pauline?" he queried, with a touch of grim cynicism.

"Of course!" she replied. "What do you mean, father? And yet——" she hesitated, looking around her, "yet I do have a strange sort of feeling as though I had been here before. But I can't have! It's absurd!"

Mother and daughter sat down under the shade of the trees, whilst we three set to work to open the cairn. I was as excited as they by this time, and I helped with a will. The old man, wielding his pick with the skill of an exminer, loosened the stones on the surface. I rolled away the big ones, and Geoffrey shovelled away the smaller stuff. At the end of an hour we had made a pretty deep excavation. We then took it in turns to work with pick and shovel in the hole, from which we threw up the stones.

Suddenly Geoffrey uttered an exclamation.

"We're on something!—What's that, doctor?" He passed me up a long bone.

"That's the tibia of a man," I replied. "I expect you'll find the rest of him there."

"Sure thing!" he said. "Here he is!" He cleared away one or two large lumps of rock and revealed the grinning skeleton of a man. "Halloa!" he added, as he bent down to it, "What's this?"

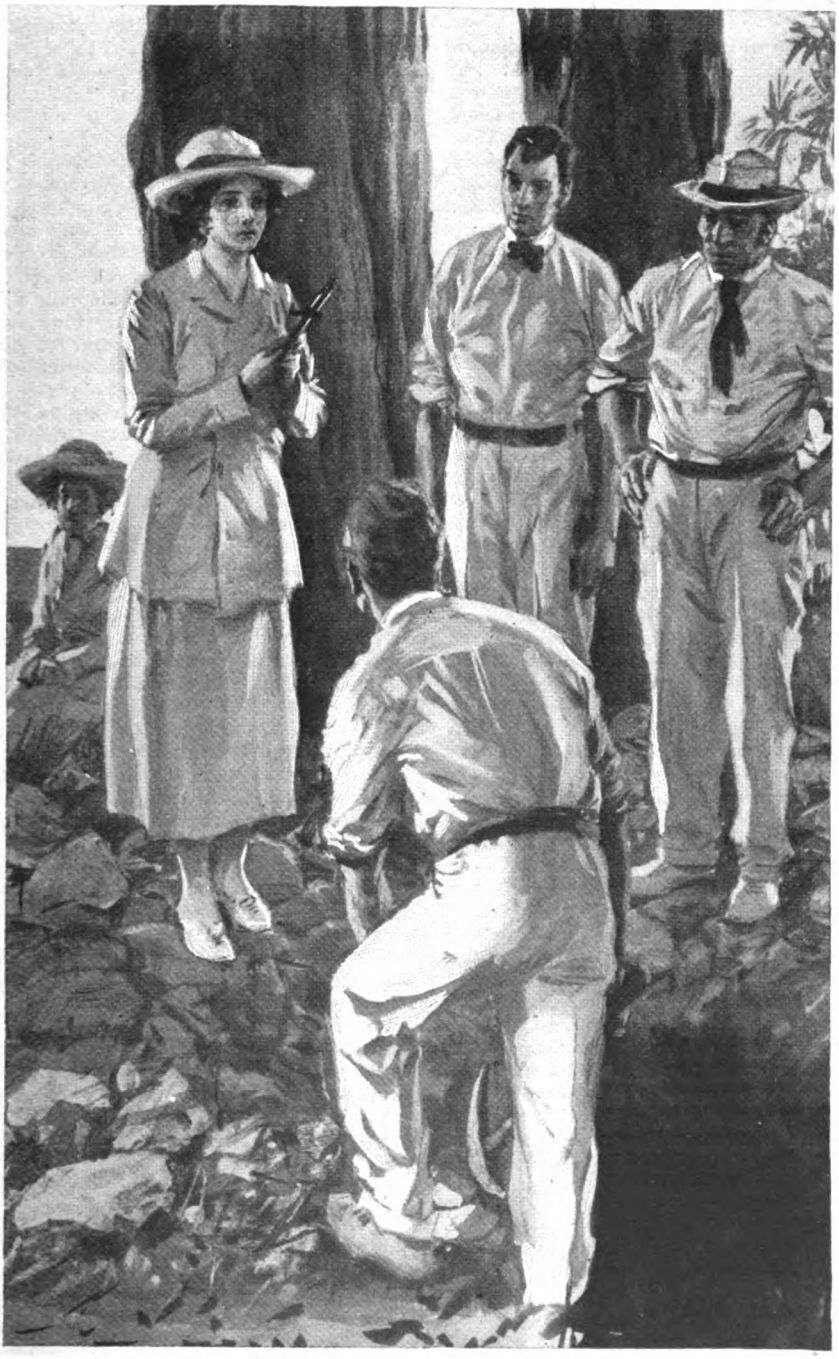
A long thin stiletto was lying loosely between the fleshless ribs of the skeleton.

The old man snatched it from him as he plucked it out.

"And by all that's holy!" he cried, "it's got her name on it! Look!"

I took it from him. The dagger was of antique pattern, its steel rusted and corroded, but still resilient enough to make it a dangerous weapon, and on the hilt, still legible, roughly inlaid in silver like the amateur work of a sailorman, was the name—*Lucia!*

"I guess she murdered him with that!" said the old man, grimly, glancing from the stiletto to the skeleton grinning up at us from the hole where it had so long lain undisturbed. He turned towards where his daughter sat in



"SHE HELD THE STILETTO, POINT TOWARDS HER, TO READ THE NAME UPON THE HILT."

the shade of the trees. "Here, Pauline!" he called to her. "Come and see—your friend the pirate and the knife that killed him!"

The girl jumped up and ran across to us, all excitement

"How wonderful!" she said. "It's like a dream come true!"

At the time, excited as we all were, I did not notice the strangeness of that spontaneous phrase. She stood upon the edge of the excavation and took the stiletto with eager curiosity from her father. She held it in both hands, breast-high, the point towards her, to read the name upon the hilt.

"Lucia!" she cried, with a strange look towards us, as though dimly and uncertainly recalling some terrible experience. "Lucia!" She repeated the name with a peculiar, slow intonation—an intonation of puzzled half-remembrance.

We stared at her, fascinated. Was our fantastic theory true?

Her gaze lost us, fixed itself into vacancy. Her features changed. An expression of vague fear—the fear of the hypnotic shrinking at some invisible danger—came into them. She opened her mouth as though to speak.

She uttered only an inarticulate cry—a cry of fright—as the loose stones of the excavation slipped from under her feet. She fell headlong into the hole, where she lay oddly—ominously—still. I jumped down after her, lifted her up. The rusty old stiletto, caught under her in her fall, had driven straight into her heart—broken off at the hilt!

The doctor stopped, and looked round upon his audience.

"And the treasure?" queried one of them.

"There was no treasure. There was no more digging that day. We took the poor girl's corpse back to the yacht, and I thought her mother would have died as well—or gone out of her mind. She was screaming to get away from the place. But the old man was not put off his game so easily. The next day, whilst I stayed on board with the distracted mother, he and his son went and dug again in that tragic cairn.

"They brought back all they found—the broken lid of a chest, branded with the date 1665. That, curiously enough, was *underneath* the skeleton, suggesting that the hoard had been rifled before the man, whoever he was, was killed."

"A strange story!" commented another of the audience. "And what's your hypothesis in explanation, doctor?"

The doctor smiled.

"Well—you can have your choice," he said. "There is the possibility that, in a prior existence, Miss Vandermeulen was in fact Lucia, that she seduced John Dawson into revealing the secret of the treasure, that she murdered him on the spot and went off with it—and that the vengeful spirit of the old buccaneer, hovering around these latitudes, came into touch with her new reincarnation, and, playing with a fine irony upon that same lust of gold which was responsible for his murder, but of which she was this time entirely innocent, led her to a death by that same poniard with which she had killed *him*. Alternatively, there is the hypothesis that her spontaneous writing and the impersonation of Lucia were but an automatic dramatisation by her subconsciousness of hints dropped into it by her brother's reading of 'Treasure Island' and subsequent conversations between her father and his son, and that her death was a mere coincidence."

"An incredibly complete coincidence!" said one of the men.

The doctor shrugged his shoulders.

"There was one other curious thing," he said. "Some years later, in a history of the buccaneers, I came across a paragraph to the effect that the island called Old Providence since the eighteenth century was known to the buccaneers as Santa Katalina, and that only subsequently was that name transferred to the islet north of it. So Pauline's subconscious memory was right! Furthermore, it stated that the large island, then called Santa Katalina, was seized and garrisoned by the buccaneers in 1664 under the leadership of a man named Mansvelt. He sailed off to get recruits, leaving the island in command of a certain Simon, and died upon the voyage. Simon surrendered the island to the Spaniards, who had besieged it. The date was 1665.

"Of course, Miss Vandermeulen may have read that paragraph and subconsciously retained the names—but, for her, it was an improbable kind of reading. At any rate, she had a curious knowledge of an out-of-the-way piece of history. As I said, when you tap the subconsciousness you never know what buried treasure you may find. Well, I leave you to your hypotheses, gentlemen." He stood up, knocked out his pipe. "Good-night!"

A Batch of Theatrical Memories

by

SIDNEY DARK

OWING to family connections with the stage, my recollections of the theatre go back many years—for a man of forty. I was quite a small boy when I first met Beerbohm Tree. He was then thin, red-headed, and very shy. I met him for the first time in one of the dressing-rooms in the old Toole's Theatre in King William Street, which was afterwards removed to make room for the extension of Charing Cross Hospital. I always remember this first meeting, because after Tree had gone the actor, in whose dressing-room I was, caught hold of my arm and said: "Boy, I hope you had a good look at that gentleman, because before you are twenty-five he will be the most famous actor in England." And he was. Beerbohm Tree, whom I knew very well in later years, was one of the most lovable men I ever met. His affectations were part of himself. He loved applause. He thoroughly enjoyed popularity. He advertised everything except his many good deeds. Incidentally, he was unquestionably an individual and genuine wit.

On one occasion he was seeing one journalist, who had come to interview him, out of his room in the dome of His Majesty's Theatre, when a second journalist came up in the lift. "Do you know Mr. Blank?" "No," was the reply. "Ah," said Tree, "he has just been taking your bread out of my mouth."

"But you forget I could engage George Robey for that sum," was his very characteristic answer to an aspiring young actor who demanded an extortionate salary. It was Tree who first thanked a certain famous critic for "praising him with faint damns," and the queer twist of the man's mind is well illustrated by his remark to a lady who came on the stage during the run of "Rip Van Winkle" and said to the actor, "I don't believe you know me, Mr. Tree?" "My dear lady," he replied, "I always find it very hard to recognize anyone in my make-up!"

Tree stories are innumerable, and, alas! most of them have been told. But his description of Sir William Treloar, then Lord Mayor of London, as "the man who pours oilcloth on the troubled waters" is probably only remembered by the few men who were present at the dinner at which the jest was made.

Tree loved to tell a story, which I am sure was apocryphal, of a widow woman bringing a small boy to the theatre for an engagement in some play for which a number of children were required. "Has your son ever acted before, madam?" she was asked. "Oh, no, sir," was the reply, "but he spoke up beautiful at the inquest."

I recall with particular pleasure lunching once with Tree and his two younger daughters, then quite children, in the dome of His Majesty's. In order to amuse his daughters Tree gave an imitation of a very near-sighted man helping himself to soda-water out of a siphon, getting the wrong side towards himself, and swishing the water over his shirt and waistcoat. The children, of course, demanded that he should do it again and again, and Tree, who enjoyed the joke every bit as much as they did, went on until he was so wet that he was compelled to change his shirt before he went out. It was so like him.

There was always a touch of the freakish boy in Tree. He cared nothing for money. As I have said, his generosity was unbounded, and few successful men were ever more sincerely mourned.

I knew Irving in the later years of his life mainly through my friendship with his son Laurence. Henry Irving was a great man, the only really great man, except Coquelin, whom I ever met in the theatre. He would have succeeded in any profession, and I have often thought what a magnificently cynical and impressive prince of the Church he would have made had he preferred the cassock to the motley. Irving had a completely sardonic mind, with a humour that evidenced disillusionment and a wit rarely without a tinge of bitterness.

There is a capital story told of a young and rather "mouthy" actor rehearsing a small part in one of the Lyceum productions. After he had spoken his few lines, the famous manager said to him:—

"Judging from your reading of this little part, my boy, I gather that your ambition is to play Macbeth one of these days, eh?"

The young actor replied that, of course, he hoped he would get on.

"Oh, I am sure you will get on, my boy, but Macbeth is the part you really want to play?"

Again the young man stammered, but the manager persisted, and forced the confession that the actor did dream at nights of one day playing Macbeth.

"That's right, my boy," said Irving. "I knew it was Macbeth you wanted to play." Then after a pause—"And damn bad you'll be!"

Irving's production of Sardou's "Dante" at Drury Lane just before his death was full of humorous incidents. Sardou would not face the dangers of the Channel, but he sent some Frenchmen to London to see that his play was produced exactly as it was written. None of them spoke a word of English and Irving spoke no French. Incidentally, he would never have dreamed of producing a play as the author had written it, even though the author had been the Archangel Gabriel. Consequently there was a long series of wrangles with the unfortunate Laurence Irving, who had translated the play, standing between his father and the Frenchmen and interpreting their wrath. I remember one morning Irving, being particularly incensed by some objection, saying to his son: "Tell them they're damn fools, my boy. Tell them they're damn fools." Then evidently fearing that Laurence would temper the expletive, he added quickly: "What's the French for damn?"

"SARDOU SENT SOME FRENCHMEN TO LONDON TO SEE THAT HIS PLAY WAS PRODUCED EXACTLY AS IT WAS WRITTEN. NONE OF THEM SPOKE A WORD OF ENGLISH AND IRVING SPOKE NO FRENCH."

Writing of Drury Lane productions, my mind goes back to the dress rehearsal of that strange American hotchpotch "Ben Hur," when Arthur Collins first brought it from America. The principal scene of the play is the chariot race, and all sorts of amazing mechanical contraptions had been devised to make the race realistic. The chariots did not really move, but a moving panorama at the back of the stage gave the idea of movement, the wheels of the chariots turned, electric fans under the stage blew up dust, and the horses wildly galloped on small moving platforms. Ben Hur's chariot was, of course, nearest to the footlights, and the nearer of the two horses was an ancient white mare with many years' stage experience. She appeared in Sullivan's "Ivanhoe" when the Palace Theatre was first opened. Tree rode her in King John, and I remember once hearing a throaty tenor warbling from her back. After a few moments of the chariot race the old mare grew weary of galloping madly and getting nowhere. She was very loosely harnessed, and it occurred to her that a quick jump to the right would land her on the solid stage and she need gallop no more. The manœuvre was promptly carried out—and imagine the scene! Horses galloping, charioteers yelling, wheels turning, dust flying, and this old grey mare looking round the theatre motionless and unperturbed!

Harris used occasionally to allow his friends to go on the stage and bid in the auction scene of "The Derby Winner." The winner was put up for sale, and after excited bidding by the villain and others was finally secured by Mrs. John Wood, to the joy of the gallery. One night Phil May was among the bidders. He was told to go on bidding up to, say, nine thousand pounds (I forget the exact figures), and then to let Mrs. John Wood secure the steed for ten thousand. But Phil May got very excited and forgot his instructions. He bid nine thousand. Mrs. John Wood replied with ten thousand, expecting the curtain and prolonged applause. But Phil May promptly shouted "Fifteen thousand!" The old actress looked round in astonishment and impressively replied, "Twenty thousand." "Twenty-five," said the artist, and he could not be stopped (so the story goes) until the horse was finally sold for a hundred and fifty thousand guineas!

When Augustus Harris first produced Wagner's "Ring," he had a dragon made for "Siegfried," which he intended to be the greatest dragon ever seen on the stage. It was fearsomely modelled. Red electric lights were its eyes and thin copper tubes were run through the body that steam might be blown through the beast's nostrils. It will be remembered that the dragon comes out of a cave at the back of the stage. It is, of course, one of the characters of the music-drama, but its music is naturally sung by a singer behind the scenes. This is what happened. The singer was ready. With him was a sub-conductor to give him the cue. Inside the body of the dragon were two supers in their shirt-sleeves to waddle the beast on to the stage. The moment arrived. The conductor raised his stick. The German bass began to sing. The stage manager gave the word to the supers. The steam tap was turned on, and the dragon emerged from the cave. Suddenly, amid Wagner's crashing chords, shrieks of agony came from the body of the dragon.

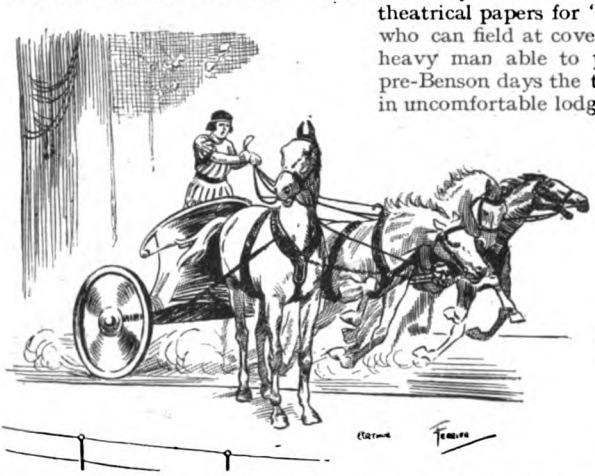
"Go on, go on, confound you!" growled the stage manager.

"We can't go on, sir, we are being burnt alive," was the agonized reply.

The dragon was a masterpiece, but his steam-pipes were too thin.

In no calling have the men and the circumstances changed so completely during the last twenty-five years as they have in the theatre. The old-time manager, who was always a showman, and very often something more, has given way to men who are merely tradesmen, and the old-time mouthing actor with his eccentricities and his impecuniosity has been replaced by better educated, "smart" men, only to be differentiated from the members of other professions by their "super-smartness."

Up to a dozen years ago Bedford Street and the Strand were full every morning of rather pathetic old gentlemen whose vocation was unmistakable and whose principal business, alas! was the search for free refreshments. There is a story which may be worth repeating of two of these old men meeting, one of them with his hand in a sling. His friend asked him what was the matter. "I went into the Bodega yesterday for my usual cigar," was the reply, "and some clumsy beast stepped on my fingers."



"IMAGINE THE SCENE! HORSES GALLOPING, CHARIOTEERS YELLING, AND THIS OLD GREY MARE LOOKING ROUND THE THEATRE MOTIONLESS AND UNPERTURBED."

Rehearsals are the bane of the actor's life, and it is amazing that he still has in most cases to rehearse without payment. I have known many cases in which actors have rehearsed for five or six weeks, and then have played for less than a week. To the spectator there is, however, considerable humour in watching rehearsals, sitting alone in a half-darkened theatre and seeing how the stage illusion is gradually created.

One of the most remarkable men that I have ever seen directing rehearsals was the late George Edwardes. James Davis, who used to write musical comedies under the pen-name of "Owen Hall," and was, incidentally, the brother of that talented novelist the late Julia Frankau, used to say that words conveyed absolutely nothing to Edwardes either when he read them or when he heard them, and I think this was at least partially true. On the other hand he had the most extraordinary eye for stage effect—for grouping, and for colour. I remember one instance in which by changing the colour of the dresses of two or three of his choristers he made a complete success of a scene that had before been garish and ineffective. George Edwardes was one of the best employers the theatre has ever known. He was the first English manager to provide his artistes with every item of clothes needed on the stage, including such things as shoes and stockings and shirts. He used, for example, to pay salaries to his poorer *employés* during long illnesses, as well as settling their doctors' bills. When he died the particular form of entertainment which he provided became entirely commercialized.

It is trite to repeat that no man has had so wide-reaching and so beneficent an influence in the modern English theatre as Sir Frank Benson. I think it was in 1900 that I went to Stratford-on-Avon for the first time to see the Benson Company's performances during the Shakespeare Festival, and certainly two out of every three of the players who have since made reputations in London were then with the company. Frank Benson has always been a very keen athlete, and the members of his company were always expected to play games as well as to act parts. There is a story that he used to advertise in the theatrical papers for "a good juvenile lead who can field at cover-point," and for "a heavy man able to play half-back." In pre-Benson days the touring actor, living in uncomfortable lodgings with no friends, and nothing much to do, did unquestionably spend the large part of his days in public-house bars. The modern actor, with his keenness for athletics and often with his intelligent interest in general affairs, is largely a Benson creation. That extremely talented musician, Christopher Wilson, who was at one time the musical director of the Benson Company, recalls an amusing incident that occurred during one of their tours. It was necessary specially to engage a harp-player in each town to play the Mendelssohn music in "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and it was part of the business of the advance agent to find this performer each week. Wilson arrived on the Sunday in a certain town and was assured that the harp-player had been found. "Where did you find him?" he asked. "Outside a public-house," was the rather disconcerting reply. Wilson was a little fearful, but he gave instructions that the man should come to rehearsal the next morning. The orchestra began to play, but the harpist was hopelessly out of tune. Wilson went over and looked at his instrument and found that it was without pedals, and it is with the pedals that the harpist controls the key. "Where are your pedals?" asked the conductor. "I beg your pardon, sir," said the man, apologetically, "but I had to take them off as I found they frayed my trousers."

A generation ago the theatrical family was far more conspicuous in the playhouse than it is to-day. Indeed, the Terrys are almost the only really famous theatrical family left. I myself have seen a dozen of them on the stage—Kate, Ellen, Marion, Fred, Marion Terry Lewis, Edith Craig, Gordon Craig, Phyllis Neilson Terry, Dennis Terry, Olive Terry, Minnie Terry, and Beatrice Terry. The younger generation hardly has the genius of the elder. Ellen Terry, indeed, stands alone in the history of the theatre as a consummate comedy actress. I recall one dramatic proof of how completely an actress she has always been. It will be recalled that some years ago Miss Terry had a remarkable benefit at Drury Lane. At the end of a long programme all the most famous players in England and many from abroad, including Dusé, were grouped round the beneficiaire, while the curtain rose and rose again, the audience shouted and shouted, flowers were showered on the stage, and Miss Terry, with her bosom swelling and her eyes streaming with tears, bowed and made little broken speeches of thanks. In order to get a better view of this great finale I had contrived to slip on to the stage and to stand among the crowd. When the curtain fell for the last time Miss Terry turned to her sister and said, in a perfectly matter-of-fact voice, "Hasn't everything gone splendidly?" Her emotion had, of course, been sincere, but she had played her part, as she always played it, for all that it was worth.

"WHEN I WAS A BOY IT WAS CONSIDERED THE LAST WORD IN 'DOGGISHNESS' TO GO TO A MUSIC-HALL, SIT AT THE CHAIRMAN'S TABLE, AND HELP TO PAY FOR HIS DRINK."

I have already referred incidentally to the frequently farcical contests between the dramatist and the actor. W. S. Gilbert allowed the actor no latitude whatever. He was given words to say and was told exactly how to say them, and any divergence was met with uncomfortable sarcasm. Gilbert, indeed, was the possessor of a very caustic tongue. I suppose his best-known gibe is his description of Tree's "Hamlet" as "funny without being vulgar." Sir Arthur Pinero is almost equally caustic and difficult. Another dramatist of less fame and of somewhat faulty education was once arguing with an actress concerning the time which a certain scene took to play. The actress said it would take half an hour. The dramatist declared it would only take twenty minutes. "I tell you," said the actress, "that I have read this scene carefully aloud, and it takes half an hour at least." "And I tell you," replied the dramatist, "that I have read it aloud and that it does not take quite twenty minutes." "Ah!" retorted the actress, "but, you see, I put in the h's!"

The music-hall is at least first cousin to the theatre, and if the old-time theatre has been washed away by the advance of civilization, it is even more true to say that the music-hall of our youth has disappeared, leaving hardly a wrack behind. I can just remember the great Macdermott, though I must have heard him sing many years after he had become famous with the "By Jingo" ditty. As a matter of fact, I can recall the chorus of the song that I did hear him sing, and it is worth quoting as a specimen of music-hall banality five-and-twenty years ago. The singer is describing the virtues of his son:—

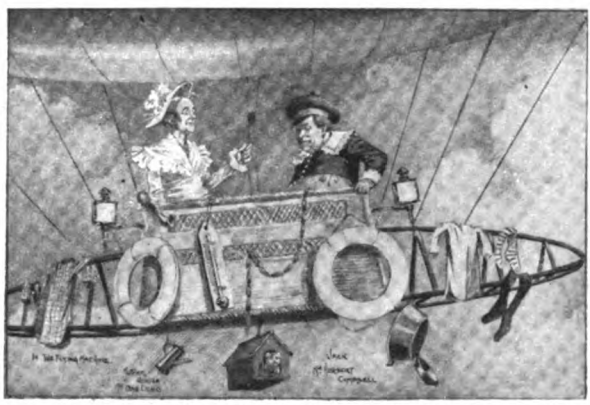
> Said Ma to Pa, "How proud of him we are!
> So good and true and perpendicular."
> Said Pa to Ma, "The boy takes after me;
> In fact, he's just the model of the boy I used to be."

Of course, I remember the old music-hall chairman, who was generally selected for his position on account of his capacity for swallowing an unlimited amount of alcohol. When I was a boy it was considered the last word in "doggishness" to go to a music-hall, sit at the chairman's table, and help to pay for his drink. And the evening was generally an expensive one.

The most characteristic and best-known of the old-time music-hall managers was Charles Morton, whose management of the Palace comes into modern vaudeville history. He was a very extraordinary old man who, although compelled by modern tastes to engage modern artistes, was himself utterly bored by any performance that he might not have seen a generation before at

the Canterbury or the Oxford. He once told me that the late Herbert Campbell was the only comedian worth listening to. Charles Morton hated everything modern, and he had a super-hatred for telephones and typewriters. He would never allow any of his own letters to be typewritten, and nothing would persuade him to have a telephone in his office. On one occasion the assistant manager at the Palace had a telephone fixed in Mr. Morton's room during the night. In the morning the old man, in a state of frenzy, cut the cord with a pair of scissors and threw the instrument into the passage.

I suppose Dan Leno was the first music-hall performer ever to earn those gigantic salaries that now make the music-hall profession far more profitable than Medicine or the Bar. Dan Leno was paid two hundred pounds a week during the run of the Drury Lane pantomime, and his income during the latter years of his life must have been at least eight thousand a year. Yet he left nothing except a life policy. Much larger sums than this have been paid to English music-hall performers in America. Miss Vesta Tilley has received as much as five hundred pounds a week across the Atlantic, and Sir Harry Lauder even more than this. Dan Leno, by the way, was a failure when he went to New York, mainly owing to the exaggerated zeal of an American press agent, who plastered the city with great posters declaring that Leno was "the funniest man in the world." The announcement was a challenge, a sort of reflection on the country that prides itself on producing funny men; the audiences were hostile, and the little man was a comparative failure. There was a curious strain of pathos in Dan Leno, as there is in so many successful comic actors, and it was probably this underlying note of sadness that made him so distinctive and so much more tolerable than most professional laugh-makers.



"THERE HAS NEVER BEEN SUCH A SUCCESSFUL COMBINATION ON THE STAGE AS DAN LENO AND HERBERT CAMPBELL IN THE OLD DRURY LANE PANTOMIMES."

There has never, I suppose, been such a successful combination on the stage as Dan Leno and Herbert Campbell in the old Drury Lane pantomimes, and the success was entirely owing to Herbert Campbell's willingness to play second fiddle and, to use the theatre jargon—"feed" his companion. I have been told (the story is probably untrue) that when Herbert Campbell was buried, a band marched before the hearse, and that after the interment it played a selection of Campbell's best-known songs, finishing with "And his day's work is done."

When I was a small boy the only places of entertainment to which the children of well-regulated families were taken were Maskelyne and Cooke's and the Christy Minstrels. I remember on one occasion my great-grandmother, who was an extremely pious old lady, expressing her pleasure when she heard that I and my brothers had been to the "Christian Minstrels."

The Minstrels, like many other admirable forms of entertainment, have been killed by the cinema. The "sit round," the conundrums, the bones and the tambourines have all gone away into the *ewigkeit*. But for years London supported two minstrel troupes, the Moore and Burgess, and the Mohawks at the Agricultural Hall. Their programmes were based on the genuine old American Negro melodies, which were a very different thing to the coon songs of a later day. I remember the Haverley Minstrels, a troupe of real Negroes, performing years and years ago at the old Her Majesty's Theatre, which used to stand on the site now occupied by the Carlton Hotel. The visit of this troupe is chiefly memorable from the fact that Charles Frohman came with them in the humble capacity of bill inspector. I think this must have been the first visit that Frohman ever paid to a city in the theatrical life of which he was destined to play so great a part.

Frohman was one of the busiest men I have ever known. He never had a moment to spare, and he never seemed to want the smallest breathing-space. In the latter part of his life he had offices at the Globe Theatre, which were approached by a small self-working lift just large enough to hold Frohman's portly little body. One morning he was going up to his offices when the lift stuck between two floors. There was enormous consternation among his staff. Engineers were sent for, and after about an hour the lift was hauled up and the great man was released. Everyone expected that he would be furious at the waste of time, but all he said was: "Say, that's the first real rest I've had in years."

THE ECLIPSE HANDICAP

BY FRANK CONDON

Illustrated by Lionel Edwards A.R.C.A.

THE three of us — Harmony Childs, Omar Gill, and George (myself) — had settled down in San Francisco, surrounded by all the comforts of a large hotel, owners of a four-thousand-dollar mutual bankroll, a motor-car, and other pleasing adjuncts to a life of calm content.

It was Omar's personal motor-car. He had bought it with his private funds, owned it in fee-simple, and drove it the same way. It looked a good deal like a highly-magnified roller-skate, but Omar was mad about it, and each morning he lured it out of the garage and bounded up and down the seven thousand hills of San Francisco, endangering human life and making noises like an enraged threshing machine.

After a month of luxurious loafing, Harmony arrived one afternoon in a state of pleasant excitement. Omar and I were languidly arising, with that calm deliberation found only among rich people, and Omar came out in his blue pyjamas and some new patent lather, and listened doubtfully to what followed. It appeared that through a lucky combination of circumstances Harmony had stumbled upon a way to invest our four thousand dollars.

"It's a fine chance to break into the bookmaking business," he said, beaming at us.

"No doubt," agreed Omar; "but what do we know about publishing, the only book you ever look in being the telephone directory?"

"Not that kind of bookmaking," Harmony explained. "This is a gambling enterprise, with others doing the gambling. There is a guy named Moses Lewis, and what he don't know about horse-racing you could get into your left eye. He wants us to go in with him, agrees to do all the real work, because of his skill, and is willing to take us on as his clerks."

"You mean this man wants to use our four housand?" I asked, somewhat tremulously.

"In a word yes," said Harmony, with increasing gusto. "We furnish him with four thousand dollars, which is roughly the capital required. You can't be a bookmaker without a certain amount of capital."

"Put our money in the hands of a stranger?" Omar interrupted. "I knew you fell down that flight of stairs, but I didn't know you hit on your head."

"He is not a stranger," Harmony continued, testily. "I know him. He is a skilled bookmaker, with years of experience, and he says that we can clean up a small fortune."

"If he's so good, why does he need us to start him?" Omar inquired. "Why does the gent wish to lean himself on our little four thousand?"

"Does he guarantee us against loss?" I asked, mildly, being interested in the funds to the extent of one thousand three hundred and some odd dollars.

"You can't guarantee anything in the horse-racing game," Harmony continued, coldly. "I should think even you would know that. In all real enterprises a person takes a chance. Look at Morgan and Rockefeller."

"Look at ham and eggs!" said Omar. "At present we are playing safe, and I believe in sticking to it."

"This man Lewis knows all about how to trim the betting public," argued our leader. "He claims that we have a chance to make a kill, and to me it looks like a nice opening."

"I've sent my money down those nice openings before," Omar retorted, "and mostly the traffic was one way. Let's hang on to this modest competence and tell Lewis to pick out someone else."

Later on, Harmony being insistent, we encountered this Moses Lewis, who was a tall, feverish gentleman, with a hooked beak and a piercing eye. We opened the negotiations, and

from the first word Omar Gill was unalterably opposed. He objected bitterly to investing our joint funds in any enterprise as uncertain as bookmaking, but there is nothing to be gained by arguing with Harmony Childs. At least, we never gained anything. It's like trying to throw a soap bubble through a stone wall. Harmony is, and always has been and will be, our respected leader, and many a time he has saved Omar and me from hunger, thirst, jail, and similar disasters. Personally I didn't burst into four ringing cheers over the knowledge that we were now going into race-track bookmaking, but this Moses Lewis had cast his fatal spell, and the night we met him at the hotel we had dinner and came to a financial understanding.

We agreed formally to let him run wild with our precious four thousand, which was all we had in the world, if you leave out Omar's motor-car. Lewis agreed to set up in business at Pergo Park on the following Monday, employing the three of us in minor capacities, and from then on the idea was to take large sums of American currency away from those misguided lunatics who bet upon the comparative speed of horses.

We embarked upon this business enterprise with Mr. Lewis, the skilled bookmaker, and the adventure lasted exactly one week, including legal holidays. We gaily began chalking up prices in the ring at Pergo Park on Monday afternoon, before the first race; and on Saturday afternoon, following the last race, Mr. Lewis washed off his slate, packed up his tin reticule, kicked his stool fretfully aside, and announced in a voice devoid of passion that we had foundered at sea with all on board.

"Can you dig up some more coin by Monday?" he asked, looking into three startled countenances.

"No," said Omar, hoarsely, before anyone else could speak. "Nor by Tuesday either. Why?"

"Then we're ruined," Lewis replied, calmly. "The game has gone against us, and we're dead broke. The old sock is empty."

These were conditions of which we three were partially aware, because we had observed the trend of business during the week, and had seen the jolly old public beat us to a fine pulp, and cash in from Mr. Lewis with disgusting regularity. We dimly realized that we were going to hear unpleasant news, but we didn't know just how bad it was. Now we got the news, as a careless roadside hen gets a four-ton truck.

"Broke," repeated our Mr. Lewis, tying on his cravat with great care. "I'm not to blame either, because I made a perfectly-balanced book all the week. But the favourites won every day, and that hurt us."

"It particularly hurts me," Omar said, grimly. "I'm hurt clear through, and I'm the one that wanted to keep away from this from the start. But no. Harmony knew that you were a skilful bookmaker. If you're a skilful bookmaker, I'm the King of Bulgaria." Omar was openly insulting and continued to be so, in a tense monotone.

"You mean we can't open shop on Monday?" Harmony asked, in a shocked voice.

"Not unless we get more working capital," Lewis said, blandly. "We're through. I'm going East next week unless I can find fresh backing."

We went sadly home that night to the Queen Mary and sat in the lee of the fireplace, wondering why Hard Luck always had our name, address, and office hours. Omar kept talking to himself in a low tone, now and then bursting into impassioned oratory concerning the throwing away of one's financial increment.

On the following morning Harmony and Omar held another warm debate, and Omar lost it. It was Harmony's urgent desire that Omar should take his self-propelling vehicle by the hand and sell it to someone for ready cash, and at first Omar declined to consider the suggestion, even in the face of a large hotel-bill and nineteen dollars for laundry. I listened to the two of them until it palled on me, and then sauntered into the open air. At noon Omar took his car for a last weepy ride. He sold it, as ordered, and when he returned to the hotel he had seven hundred dollars, which, as he stated with wrathful emphasis, was just half what it was worth.

"And maybe you two sharks think I'm going to split this seven hundred with you," he said, threateningly. "I'll lend you a few dollars for food, but beyond that, nothing doing. I am going to hang on to this with both hands, because the future looks very sterile indeed."

"I always split with *you*," Harmony said, reproachfully.

"I know," Omar admitted; "but this is one of those times when three into seven hundred don't go."

Meantime our former gambling partner had discovered that nobody else would back him, and he prepared to depart for the East. He blew into the hotel on Monday, and stated that he was all through trying to make an honest living in California.

"I'm going back to New York," he grunted. "I did my best, but the luck was against us. You probably think I'm a false alarm, but I'm not, and to show that I feel sorry for losing your money, I'm going to turn over my assets to you."

"What are they?" Omar asked, coldly.

"I have a trunkful of books," continued Mr. Lewis, "and some evening clothes, and a few shares of mining stock worth about a dime, and some other household truck, all having no great value, but all yours. I go East stripped bare. I shall also transfer Gallops to you, showing that my heart is in the right place and my intentions good."

Harmony glanced up.

"Gallops," he ruminated. "Giving us Gallops is far from good intentions. He's about as much of an asset as a used smallpox sign."

"Such as he is, you have him," Lewis went on, cheerfully. "I'm doing my best to make up for the loss I caused. I told you I'd give you everything I own, and I so do."

Then he made out some papers and turned them over to Harmony, after which he said a few parting remarks, and finally left us, just as though nothing much had happened.

This Gallops which he referred to was a racehorse, according to a certain loose manner of speaking. Nobody ever denied that he was a horse, because he had four legs and a long tail, and looked a good deal like the familiar equine of commerce. But, on the other hand, nobody around San Francisco was ever fooled into thinking he was a racehorse. In California sporting circles Gallops was notorious, and his track-history was a hissing and a byword.

Lewis had bought the poor old ruin from a needy friend, and had always cherished the insane notion that Gallops was a regular racehorse and could run in competition with other animals. He entered the horse in half-a-dozen races within a year, and I believe that on one occasion Gallops finished next to last. That was the race in which Slippery Elm fell down on his wishbone about halfway through, and tangled himself up with the fence. When Slippery finally regained an upright position and resumed, the race was ending. That was the only time Gallops finished next to last. The other times Gallops finished last, a good fair-and-square last.

In appearance Gallops was a small, black-coated, and unambitious beast, with a despondent look about him that made you believe he must have suffered some terrible tragedy in youth. He had pale blue eyes and they protruded into space, giving him a startled and imbecile expression. He was worth about forty dollars for purposes of glue and other by-products, and nobody knew his age, but it was popularly supposed that he dated back to the period when dressy gents stopped wearing detachable cuffs.

This was the sad-faced equine which Mr. Lewis now added to his alleged assets, and turned over to us in lieu of our four thousand dollars.

Mr. Lewis departed for New York soon after, and in the course of the next few days Harmony, Omar, and I wandered out to the scenes of our undoing at Pergo Park. While we were there it occurred to Harmony to have a brief look at Gallops. We were directed to his boudoir at the end of a row of ramshackle stables, and found the place in charge of a man ninety years old and partly deaf. He moodily opened a door and led us to the inner sanctum, where we found Gallops engaged in eating away the woodwork.

"So you own Gallops, do you?" the oldish person remarked, after we had yelled at him a while. "Well, there's a thirty-dollar bill against him for oats. Somebody's got to pay it."

"Sure," said Omar. "I might have known."

Harmony and I gazed at our new possession without the slightest enthusiasm. He looked pessimistic and underfed, and you could see all his larger ribs and part way into his engine-room. He had a high, proud head and a curly mane. Omar tried to look at his teeth and nearly lost two fingers.

"This being Gallops," he remarked, bitterly, "he ought to be shot or given to some curio collector. I've been looking at horses all my life, and I know when to give them away."

"We didn't expect him to be good for much when we took him," Harmony reminded, running his hand up and down Gallops's centreboard. After a prolonged argument with the old man about the oats-bill, we returned to the Queen Mary and settled down in our new poverty, drawing small sums from the flinty-hearted Omar and listening to his never-ending reproaches.

A week later we made another pilgrimage to the track. The day's sport was ended and the racegoers had long since departed for the city. We were standing there innocently, leaning against the railing in the semi-obscurity of the late afternoon, when something passed on the other side. It went by like a six-inch shell. There was the rush of wind, the hum of a moving object, and then silence.

"What was *that*?" Omar exclaimed, turning a startled eye on me.

"It sounded like a horse," I returned.

Harmony had lighted his match, and when it burned his fingers he dropped it.

"It sounded like a horse sure," Omar admitted, peering down the dim track.

"No horse lives that can go that fast," Harmony retorted. "There ain't no such horse."

We stood there in foolish debate, and finally climbed on the fence and sat there expectantly. Soon we discerned something coming toward us out of the gloom. It was an indistinct form at first, but it gradually took shape, and as it approached we saw that it was a horse, and perched on its back was a small figure. When the animal was opposite, Harmony shouted, and the rider came over.

"What horse is that?" he demanded of the dim form.

"Gallops," said the voice.

I heard a noise as of Omar falling off the fence, and when I looked he was picking himself up.

"Gallops?" Harmony repeated, with forced calm. "Gallops? You ain't making any mistake, are you? Sure that's Gallops?"

"I ought to know, boss," said the voice. "I'm the exercise-boy on this track, and I sleep in the same stable with this hoss."

"Did you go by us a few minutes ago?" Harmony inquired, incredulously.

"Sure I did go by you," said the boy. "We was agoin' it, wasn't we?"

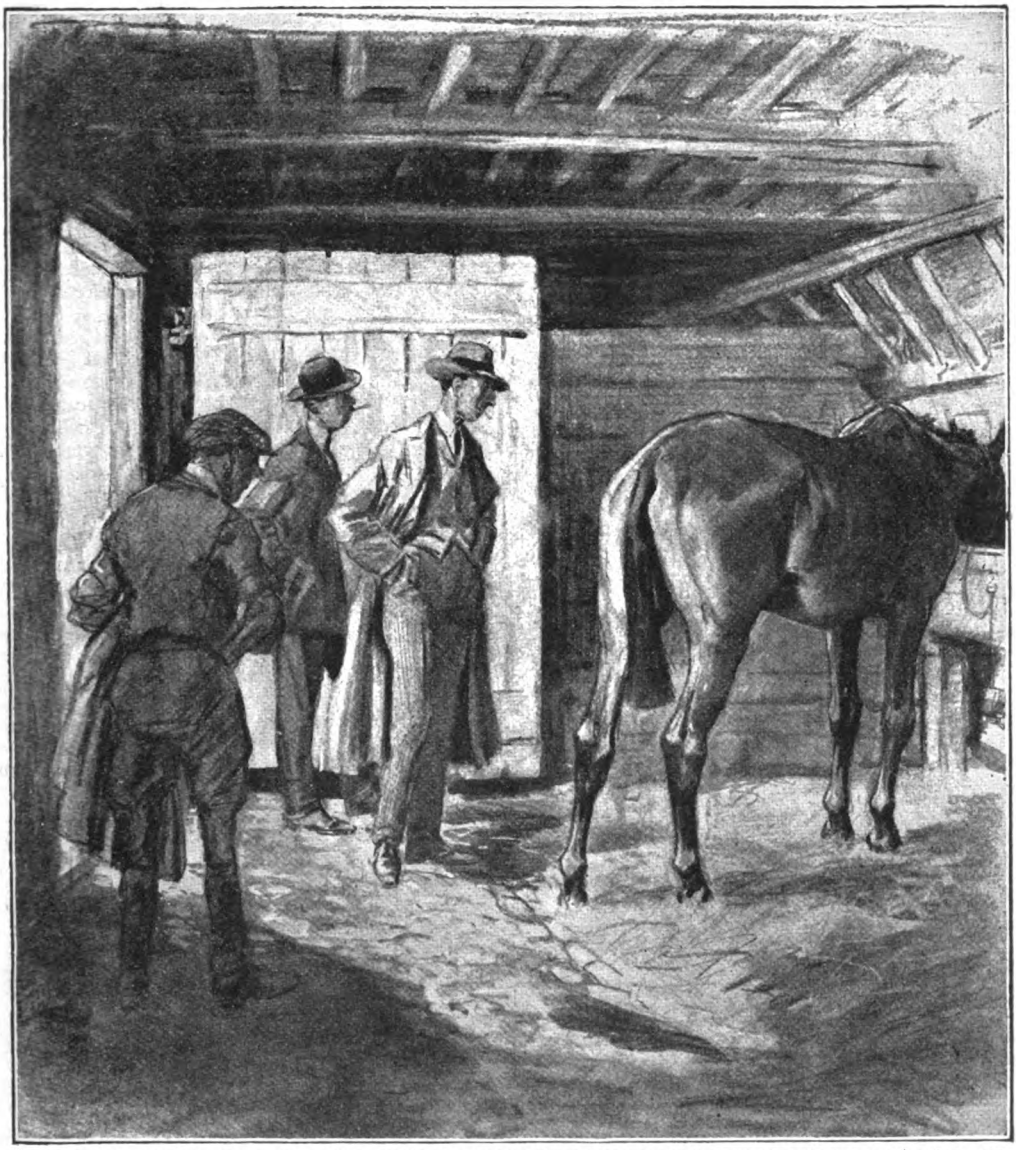
He chuckled gently and stroked the surprising beast.

We climbed down on the track-side and made a careful investigation. The lad was telling the truth. The horse was our own Gallops, popeyes and all. We later learned that the youth worked in the particular group of stables infested with our gift horse, and it seems he derived singular enjoyment from taking our asset out and running him around the track after office hours.

"Boss, how he kin go!" said the boy, admiringly; and we felt Gallops anew to make sure it was he.

"Have you run him far?" Harmony demanded, and the boy announced that he had merely jogged a fast quarter mile.

"Very good," said Harmony. "I'm Mr. Childs, and he's my horse. Run him clean



"HARMONY AND I GAZED AT OUR NEW POSSESSION WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST ENTHUSIASM. HE LOOKED UNDERFED, AND YOU COULD SEE ALL HIS LARGER RIBS."

round the track this time, and we'll hold a watch. And don't forget to hurry him."

"All right," said the jockey. "I didn't know this was your hoss."

"Nor I," said Harmony, and the lad steered Gallops out to the centre of the track and started.

There, in the gathering dusk, we timed our astonishing racehorse. He got off like a Mauser bullet, we heard the departing thud of hoofs and a little later the noise began coming from the opposite direction. Harmony and Omar both held their watches, and I now forget what the time of that test was. Anyhow, if I did remember, and put it in, people would call me an infernal liar. Let it go with the truthful statement that it was faster than any horse ever travelled a mile in California up to this time. It was one of these miracle miles. The boy turned round and cantered back to us. Omar closed his watch.

"What's the matter with him?" he asked. "He never went that fast before in his life. What have you been doing to him?"

"Not a thing," grinned the boy. "The fact is, this here Gallops is a peculiar hoss, and I'm the only one knows it. See them funny eyes? Them ain't regular hoss eyes. No, sir. This is a popeyed hoss, and he can't run in the daytime on account of them eyes. He hates

daylight and won't have nothin' to do with it. But give him a little darkness, like we're havin' now, and he's the dog-gone fastest racehorse in the world. He's what I calls a night-runner, and there ain't nothin' on four legs that can beat him."

"That's funny," said Harmony, in a calmer manner. "Take him back to the stable, and here's a dollar for your trouble."

Omar painfully dug up the money, and the boy disappeared. Then the three of us walked thoughtfully away to catch the car for San Francisco.

"A night-runner," said Omar, reflectively. "There's something I never did hear tell of. We now own a horse which can only go in the evening. Won't it be sweet for us if they ever have horse races at night!"

"Yes," I agreed, "but they never did have night races, so I suppose we needn't bank much on that."

"Anyhow," said Harmony as we caught the car, "it was worth something to know this about Gallops."

"Yes—worth a dollar," answered Omar, thinking of that same.

Five days later, at three o'clock on the afternoon of a very rainy, miserable day, the door burst open and Harmony Childs dashed in. One look at his flushed countenance assured me that he was coming out with an idea.

"It was bound to come," he said. "There's no such thing as the luck going one way all the time."

"What's up?" I asked.

"I've got a grand hunch," he continued. "This horse of ours, which has so far never won a race, is about to win one."

"You go and see a doctor," Omar snorted. "You've got a fever."

"Listen," said Harmony. "You remember the other day when I said if we could ever get Gallops into a race under the proper lighting conditions, we would thereby win a race with him? Very good. The right condition is about to arrive. I am going to enter our mutual horse in the third race at Tia Juana on the afternoon of Thursday, the 12th of August, time about three o'clock."

"Which is down in Mexico," Omar returned, in disgust. "We are up here in San Francisco, and so is our horse. Why are you going down there, and how are you going to get there?"

"In Tia Juana," Harmony continued, impressively—"in Tia Juana on Thursday, the twelfth of August, at three o'clock, there is to be an eclipse of the sun. It will likewise be elsewhere on the North American continent, but the path of greatest totality, so the paper says, runs across northern Mexico, and through Tia Juana. Because of this scientific fact, a crowd of astronomers are going down there, and so are we. Does all this mean anything to you two mental giants?"

"Not a thing," Omar admitted, "unless you get a job carrying bags for some astronomers."

"Well, it means something to me," Harmony went on, with a triumphant note in his voice. "This eclipse will bring about a condition of partial darkness, which is meat for Gallops. He's going to find just enough murk for those popeyes of his, and thus we enter him in the three-o'clock race and win it. That's plain, isn't it?"

"Yes," said Omar, "but if we send him down to Mexico, it means plenty of expenses; and how do we pay all those expenses?"

"With what remains of the seven hundred you got for your car," Harmony answered, cheerfully. "You'll have just enough left to pay the preliminary bills and enough for the hasty betting which I intend to do."

"You're going to *bet* on Gallops?" Omar asked, doubtfully.

"Everything you have left," Harmony answered. "The horse will be about a hundred to one, as he always is. We will take what is left of your fund, which ought to be about five hundred by that time, and lay it all at those sweet odds. We therefore clean up something like fifty thousand dollars."

"I regret to see that you are no longer partially insane," Omar remarked, coldly. "You are now all insane."

"We win just about fifty thousand dollars," Harmony said, rolling the figures under his tongue like a sweet morsel. "This is not a gamble at all. This is what we term a mathematical certainty. We own a night-runner that can beat any horse in the world, and at Tia Juana he will probably be running against a bunch of hounds. It is all over but banking the money."

"All of which is interesting," Omar said, "until it begins reaching out for the remains of my car-money. Then I get into it and you can hear me yelling for miles."

At this point Harmony encountered his first rough sledding, because Omar refused flatly to have anything to do with the Tia Juana enterprise. Our leader argued, threatened, cajoled, and pleaded. He pointed to the fact that the plan was an open-and-shut cinch, wherein we stood no chance to lose a cent. We entered our horse, put down our bets at a hundred to one, or maybe better, and then automatically collected our winnings. It took four hours. At the end of that time little Omar moaned piteously and signified that he would pay our expenses down to Tia Juana.

"Why, you talk as if I was borrowing money from you," Harmony said, sharply, when it was over. "I am about to make a fortune for you, and you ought to be down on your knees thanking me."

Hurrying over the preliminaries, we shipped Gallops in a commodious box-car and left Oakland in the same, sharing it with the horse, because Omar declined to buy us regular transportation. On that trip Omar found another genuine worry.

"Did you ever think what a small horse Gallops is?" he demanded of Harmony.

"What's that got to do with it?" Harmony asked. "They don't judge horse races by the size of the horse."

"I know," Omar grunted; "but we're going to race our horse on a day when it gets dark. He's a small horse, and if this eclipse gets too durned dark, and if the finish is anyways close, maybe the judges won't be able to see him. Where would we be then, with my money up, eh? Suppose some large, high horse gets between the judge's stand and Gallops and it's pretty dark? What then?"

"You can certainly find a lot of original things to fret about," Harmony replied. "This is an eclipse we're talking about—not a midnight affair. Eclipses make things partly dark."

We arrived in Tia Juana without adventure, unloaded Gallops with care, and stored him away in a stable with a competent attendant, and then sat down to wait for three o'clock on the afternoon of Thursday, August 12th.

Harmony engaged a capable boy to give our popeyed steed a daily work, and as this occurred in broad daylight, there was no chance that our precious secret would leak out. Of the car-money, Omar still had something over four hundred left. I remember that the races were largely attended that year, betting was heavy, and the ring was full of prosperous bookmakers. With everything looking bright and cheerful, Omar continued to fret.

"Yes, but just how dark will it be?" he asked Harmony repeatedly and nervously.

"Just like it gets at dusk," our leader replied. "Why do you keep on pestering me about that?"

"Because Gallops is so little," Omar insisted, "and likewise because all this money we are about to wager is the sole remains of my car. I was fond of that car, and I'd like to buy it back some day."

"An eclipse," Harmony explained, gently, "is a partial obscurity of the sun, producing a semi-daylight condition, bordering on dusk. It is different from night-time.

"THE FACT IS, THIS HERE GALLOPS IS A PECULIAR HOSS, AND I'M THE ONLY ONE KNOWS IT."

It will be just dark enough for Gallops to run one of his high-speed races, and that means we cash in without further ado. Now say no more."

"All right," Omar returned, but I could see that he was still anxious, in spite of repeated assurances.

"You know how it is, George," he confided to me, as the fateful 12th drew nigh. "It's all my money and it's all of it. If we lose that four hundred we're cooked. I don't want that horse overlooked by any near-sighted judges in case the finish is a close one."

I added my solace to the words of Harmony, and so the situation drifted along, until Thursday morning was upon us.

Of course the previous racing record of our entry was known to the fraternity, and on Thursday we had to stand fresh joking. Also on Thursday morning our first bit of hard luck dropped in for a call. The jockey employed by Harmony in the regular way to ride Gallops fell off a stable-roof and broke his leg. Harmony heard the news, and started at once to locate another jockey, because if we failed to get Gallops into the three o'clock race we would have to wait for the next eclipse, and eclipses are none too plentiful anywhere.

I likewise hurried hither and yon looking for a rider, but it was Omar who trotted into the stable toward noon, towing behind him a green jockey, named Schwartz, whom he had dug up in San Diego. He was a dough-faced-looking individual, but he was a jockey.

"Can you ride a horse?" Harmony asked, looking him over with a doubtful eye.

"Sure," said Schwartz, complacently. "If I can't ride a horse, then nobody can't. I only weigh ninety-six pounds."

"And ninety-five of it is below your chin, too," Harmony commented, staring hard at Omar's find. "However, we have got to have a jockey. Go in there and get acquainted with Gallops."

"I suppose," Omar said, some time later, "that you want me to bet every dollar of the cash we have left?"

"Certainly," said Harmony. "How much is there?"

"About four hundred and a quarter."

"The three of us will split that and spread it thin over the ring," Harmony went on. "Gallops is always a hundred to one, so it makes between forty and fifty thousand we win."

"It's all right," said Omar, "only we've got to remember that Gallops is a mighty small horse. And this is my last four hundred. Remember that?"

"We got a fine chance of forgetting it," I said, a little peevishly. "A fine chance."

I remember now that some time that morning, between nine and noon, Omar was mysteriously missing, and I searched for him in vain. He reappeared at lunch, and his nervousness seemed to have gone. He spoke of the approaching race with something akin to confidence, and when it came time for him to unbelt and share the money with us, so that we could spread it over the ring, he did so without a protest. It was entirely unlike Omar.

As for Harmony, that urbane gent was acting as though the race was already run and we were standing in line in some good bank, waiting for the man to change our fortune into large bills.

"There's a nice summer hotel up at Monterey that I've had my eye on for a long time," he said, cheerfully. "We can buy that place for about twenty thousand dollars, and it's an established money-maker. I'd like to go into the hotel business for a year or two."

"I'd like a home myself," Omar agreed. "My idea of heaven is to live in a room costing twelve dollars a day and not be charged anything for it."

The three of us watched the early races with but languid interest. Harmony gave the final instructions to Schwartz, and they were indeed simple and comprehensible to the most elemental natures. Schwartz was merely to sit on Gallops and hit him with the whip when the race began, sending him out in front of the other five horses and keeping him in that relative position for the entire mile and a quarter. There was no finesse or generalship demanded of Schwartz, which was a good thing.

"Hit him with the whip, and then keep on hitting him," was Harmony's parting command, and after Schwartz promised to do so the three of us descended upon the unsuspecting betting-ring to take forty thousand dollars away from those sharks in human form.

The scheduled eclipse came along just as announced in the newspapers, and from noon on it grew darker steadily. It was that queer, unnatural darkness that is slightly like evening, but not quite, and it gave precisely the sort of lighting arrangement that suited our racehorse. By the time the Empire Handicap came around you could just see from the ring up to the stands, and Harmony rubbed his hands with the joyous self-appreciation of a man who knows his worth.

On every book poor old Gallops was a joke entry, and his price was one hundred to one, except in a few cases where you were allowed to bet three or four dollars at two hundred to one. I hurried from book to book, laying my wagers, and off in the distance I could see Harmony and Omar doing likewise. About five minutes before the horses stepped out to face the barrier, the three of us got together in the grand stand, and, after discussing the figures with me and Omar, Harmony took a piece of lead-pencil and a programme and figured that we won forty-three thousand dollars.

"In cash," Harmony said, gleefully. "That's the best of it. Real money to buy things with."

The barrier then went up suddenly. The race began, and there is no need for a painfully detailed description of it, because it worked out precisely as Harmony planned. When the six horses jumped away from the barrier, Gallops sort of volplaned into the air, and when he landed on four feet he was the seventh part of a mile out in front of those hounds and was already a winner. Anyone could see that.

"**Now,**" said Harmony, turning to Omar, "you can see for yourself that this eclipse isn't as dark as you feared. There is no chance that the judges will overlook Gallops."

"You said a hatful," admitted Omar. "There's one thing I *am* sure of."

We watched the parade as it dashed by the grand stand, with our night-running wonder out in front, and going like a runaway comet. All around us were exclamations of surprise, with people asking each other if that was Gallops leading; and then the shocked answers in the affirmative. We saw the procession disappear into the murky turn, with our noble steed increasing his lead, and the other beetles bunched far behind.

In the betting-ring the Shylocks watched the miracle, and we could hear their profane lamentations up in the stand. We waited patiently for the spectacle to emerge from the eclipse and dust into the home stretch, and when the runners once more appeared, I saw with glad content that Gallops was leading by the length of a rifle-shot. It was all over.

Harmony freed himself of a joyous cheer, and Omar unbelted a yell of triumph. I was just on the point of making some noise on my own hook, when I turned and gazed down on the track. I then saw something that has never been beaten in the annals of American race-tracks. With my mouth wide open in readiness for the unyelled yell, I saw that young Mr. Schwartz, our substitute jockey, had burst into flame, as it were. He was surrounded with an aura of light, and came down the home-stretch like a Salvation Army Christmas-tree. Around his neck there glowed a row of electric bulbs, casting their radiance hither and yon, lighting up the scene most effectively, and calling the judges' attention to the fact that Schwartz and Gallops were now winning a horse race.

Gallops came down the stretch to the wire bedecked with twinkling lights, and passed under the wire, ten good lengths in front of the second horse.

There was a surprised murmur in the stand, because none of those hard-boiled racegoers had ever before witnessed a lit-up jockey coming home on an illuminated horse. I glanced over towards Harmony Childs and beheld a pitiful sight. He was clinging weakly to a pillar, and had turned the colour of fresh ashes. A few seats off, Omar Gill arose with a glad, brisk smile, gave vent to a shriek of triumph, and started down for the betting-ring, intending to begin the collection of large sums of money.

There was a terrible shindy down on the track a moment later, with attendants attacking Schwartz and dragging him from his mount. The astounded judges sent for our jockey and shrieked at him. Harmony and I crept into the crowd, and when Schwartz began to talk to the judges it was clear enough. He stated briefly that Mr. Gill, part owner of the horse, had ordered him to wear a wiring system and pocket-battery, and to turn on the juice coming down the stretch.

"What for?" yelled an astonished judge.

"So's you'd be sure to see me," said Schwartz, and then they pulled him off Gallops and disqualified him.

"WHEN THE SIX HORSES JUMPED AWAY FROM THE BARRIER, GALLOPS SORT OF VOLPLANED INTO THE AIR."

"GALLOPS, BEDECKED WITH TWINKLING LIGHTS, PASSED UNDER THE WIRE TEN GOOD LENGTHS IN FRONT OF THE SECOND HORSE."

On modern race-tracks there is a strong prejudice against jockeys and horses carrying a full electric equipment, so the officials took about a minute to rule Gallops out of that race entirely. It was just the same as though he had never run. They gave the Empire Handicap to a skate named Phelopian, which had finished a street behind our night-runner. Harmony had the blind staggers at this point, and I led him round behind the stand and into the yard where the cars start for San Diego. Omar was nowhere. So was our forty-three thousand dollars.

On the way back to the hotel, where we owed quite a bill, Harmony slunk back in the corner of a seat, with an unlighted cigarette drooping from his lower lip. He looked as miserable as I felt. "George," he said finally, as we approached town, "when Omar was a boy he fell off a high bridge. Nothing saved his life but the fact that he fell into the water, which was about *nine* feet deep. He hurt himself quite a bit. And it was too bad."

"Too bad he hurt himself?" I asked, *in* surprise.

"No," said Harmony, "too bad there was any water in that river."

Then we got off the car and walked into the hotel, just three meals away from death by slow starvation.

The Secret of the Mystery of "A VISION OR——?"

By DAVID DEVANT.

SAID plainly in the story that the young man was a conjurer who had some scheme "for winning fame and fortune in five minutes." For "five minutes" read "quickly." Aunt Jane exaggerated. Aunt Janes always do.

The suicide was a well-arranged piece of spoof which brought the young man all the advertisement he desired. Sylvia was in the secret all the time; she acted her part well to benefit her lover. Can you not see him getting his first engagement at a music-hall directly his secret was given away?

How was the "suicide" managed? Well, remember the conditions; the "corpse" had to vanish without leaving any trace behind.

What was the "corpse"? A hollow, indiarubber figure, easily carried in a bag attached to a bicycle. Having expanded the figure to the right size by using his bicycle pump, the young man tied a long piece of string to it and laid it on the line.

Holding the free end of the string in his hand, the young man then hid himself by the side of the line and awaited the arrival of the train.

The engine knocked the figure on one side without damaging it. The young man drew the figure towards him, released the air, packed the figure on his bicycle, and rode away.

The footsteps heard at the opening of the story, the tramp who tried to stop Sylvia, and the punctured tyre had nothing to do with the mystery, but I wanted—if possible—to put some readers on the wrong scent.

Of course, Sylvia's anxiety to get to the station in time was real, for if she had not been there her side of the story would not have been complete. Her swoon in the station-master's office was a piece of acting. The hussy was probably thinking all the time that her young man's scheme for a big advertisement as a prelude to his first engagement at the music-halls had come off. It had.

No one guessed every detail of the missing part of the story (published in the July number), but a few writers got near the mark.

The most common error was in supposing that the young man would have deliberately caused Sylvia a good deal of painful anxiety by not letting her into the secret. I purposely laid one little trap in the story, and nearly everyone fell into it. The man who tried to stop Sylvia was not her lover.

Many writers guessed that the "corpse" was a dummy figure of some kind, but the usual explanation was that it was a dummy filled with hay. If such a figure had been run over by a train the man would have had some difficulty in clearing up afterwards.

Some writers suggested that the lover was putting a new illusion to the test, and had brought with him an elaborate arrangement of mirrors, to be used at the side of the line. Again, rather difficult to clear up afterwards! One competitor suggested that the young man was putting a new invention to the test. I gather that the invention had to do with some device attached to the engine by which anyone in front of a train could be blown away and into a kind of safety net. Personally, I should not care to test such an invention, no matter who the inventor was.

The best explanation was the following, which was sent in by Count Charles de Souza, 21, Charleville Road, Kensington, London, W.:—

"The missing corpse was a dummy made of indiarubber or some other soft and unbreakable material, which was removed easily from the railway track after the passing of the train that ran over it. The success of the experiment, or trick, depended greatly on the degree of secrecy with which it was undertaken and carried out, and although some anxiety on the part of the budding conjurer with regard to the probable effects on his *fiancée* threatened at one moment to wreck or endanger his plans, he succeeded, thanks chiefly to the darkness of a tempestuous night, in bringing off his ingenious and audacious performance. He achieved fame instantly by disclosing his secret doings at an opportune moment; his story and explanation of the mystery was set down under huge headings in the *Daily Sensationalist*; he obtained immediately afterwards a several-weeks engagement on the music-halls at a salary of three hundred pounds a night to do nothing more elaborate than to state before huge and thrilled audiences he was *not* a Devant Mystery; he got further highly remunerative employment from an American advertising syndicate to repeat his now far-famed trick on the New York—San Francisco railway with a dozen dummies dressed up as Pomeranian landowners; and finally he was sent out by a pushing company of hosiers and outfitters at a tremendous rate of pay, to tour amongst the wildest tribes of Africa and lecture on the art of *How to make the human body disappear when it's dark.*

"Needless to say he quickly espoused his faithful and sporting inamorata; he was happy ever after, and had a numerous and well-constituted progeny, who made the delight of his once ill-disposed step-aunt."

THE ROMANCE OF THE SANDWICHMAN

BY HAYDEN CHURCH.

Illustrated by Graham Simmons, and from Photographs.

DOWN Regent Street, in vivid and ironic contrast with that thoroughfare's smart shops and the representatives of the well-to-do world who saunter past its alluring show-windows or roll along in luxurious motor-cars, there plods stolidly a dreary procession of shabbily-clad, unkempt, hopeless-looking, down-at-heel men. Each of them carries on his shoulders an iron framework to which is attached an upright board with a placard, advertising a new play, a new singer, a "beauty doctor," or mayhap an exhibition of paintings in near-by Bond Street.

Just a procession of sandwichmen—long or short according to the purse of the advertiser—and so common a sight that not one passer-by in a hundred gives it so much as a second glance, unless it be to study the announcement that is repeated again and again as each human item of the drab, unlovely procession shambles by in its turn.

And even if, inspired by some sudden interest in the personal element of the sandwich line, some newborn curiosity as to what manner of being it is who is obliged, for the sake of a mere pittance, to turn himself into a perambulating hoarding, one does pause for a more detailed scrutiny, what is the result of his examination?

Many of the men who now carry "sandwich" boards once occupied lofty positions. Among them is an ex-barrister who was one of the counsel in the famous Maybrick poisoning case; another, once a man of wealth, now carries "The Banner" past the fashionable clubs of which he was formerly a member.

Study the sandwichmen as they trudge along, each bent under the weight of his heavy boards, or "banners" as they themselves term them. Human flotsam and jetsam they seem and are, all wearing dingy cloth caps and tattered, often patched, suits—coat, waistcoat, and trousers seldom a match—some smoking dirty pipes and some not, according to their ability to buy or borrow tobacco, and all with hopeless faces and eyes, you may notice, that seldom leave the ground.

One dull, vacant, tired face after another, mostly those of middle-aged or elderly men; faces as similar and almost as expressionless as the faces of sheep. Manifest "down-and-outers" every one of these. And how came they to be down and out? Thereby hangs many a moving, dramatic, and tragic history—a history, oft-times, of gradual descent from lofty heights to the lowest depths. Could we learn the story in each individual case, the result would be such a series of human documents as has rarely, if ever, been placed before the readers of the world.

They once called themselves self-respecting citizens, did many of the sandwichmen of London. They are nearly all ex-something—ex-actors, ex-business men, ex-clergymen, ex-policemen, ship captains, Army men, and physicians—these sad ghosts of the gutters. And even now their lives are full of tragic surprises, relieved occasionally by strokes of fortune, as when they find money or articles of value during their weary wandering.

It is not easy to obtain from the sandwichmen themselves any information about their often chequered histories. Hiding under assumed names, as many of them do, they have buried their past, and few will consent to resurrect its memory. But those there are to whom the secrets of many of these derelicts have been revealed, and from two of these it has been the writer's privilege to learn real life histories as strange as any ever imagined by Dickens or Hugo or Eugène Sue.

To-day the largest employer of sandwichmen in London, and probably in the world, is Mr. A. A. Felton, who specializes in theatrical advertising and whose premises are located in Church Street, Shaftesbury Avenue, just in the

"A FASHIONABLY-DRESSED MAN JUMPED OUT, RAN UP TO THE YOUNG FELLOW IN THE SANDWICH LINE, AND ALMOST CARRIED HIM TO THE CAR, BOARDS AND ALL."

rear of the Palace Theatre. Mr. Felton has had many years' experience of the "sandwich" industry, and some two years ago he acquired the business of another famous employer of sandwichmen, namely, Mr. W. R. Smith—"Smith of Ham Yard," as he was known, who had had perhaps more experience with the humble carriers of the "banner" than any other one person. "Ham Yard" is an obscure little court just behind Piccadilly Circus, and there, for over forty years, Mr. Smith made a living for himself by carrying on the sandwich business.

In a recent conversation with Mr. Felton, I mentioned some of the extraordinary tales of sandwichmen that I had heard from the lips of "Smith of Ham Yard," most of them tales of men who, from occupying responsible and, in many cases, prominent positions in the community, have sunk, either through their own weaknesses or those of others, to the humble *rôle* of carrying sandwich boards in the streets of London.

Mr. Felton remarked that his own experience has made him acquainted with many such cases, and he gave me the details of a comparatively recent one.

"You can never be sure," he said, "who or what a sandwichman is or has been. Some time ago I noticed among the men working for us quite a young fellow, well built, apparently sound and in good health, who had a certain air of 'class' about him, and who was dressed far better than most of the men who are reduced to carrying boards. Impressed by his whole appearance, I took him aside one day and asked him what he was doing in a job like that? He answered evasively that he had tried to get something better but couldn't. He was evidently indisposed either to tell anything about himself or to be assisted, and in the end I gave him up. A few days later he failed to apply for his pay for his day's work, and the next morning I got a telephone message from either 'Vine Street or Marlborough Street Police Station, I forget which, telling me that a pair of our sandwich-boards had been left there. Connecting the two things, I inquired of the young chap's companions in the 'line' and heard this queer story. The men were making their way along Regent Street, when suddenly an expensive motor-car that was being driven past stopped. It contained a fashionably-dressed man and woman, and the former jumped out, ran up to the young fellow in the sandwich line, and, after a short, excited conversation, almost carried him to the car, boards and all, whereupon he ordered the chauffeur to drive at once to an address in a fashionable neighbourhood. Evidently, on the way home, the youngster insisted on leaving the sandwich-boards, and so they stopped at the police-station and got rid of them. That is all I ever knew, but, of course, the assumption is that our young sandwichman belonged to some well-to-do family, and, through some unknown set of circumstances, had been compelled to gain a temporary livelihood by carrying the 'banner.' That, moreover, is only one of many curious episodes of the kind that have come to my personal notice.

"One of the most extraordinary characters that I have ever encountered among our sandwichmen," Mr. Felton went on, "was an ex-barrister who, before his descent in the social scale, had been sufficiently prominent in his profession to have been one of the junior counsel in the famous Maybrick poisoning case. Nearly all sandwichmen acquire nicknames, and this individual was known to his fellow-board-carriers as 'The Lawyer.' During his years as a sandwichman he eked out his regular earnings by writing begging letters for his mates. He charged them twopence a letter, a penny for writing the missive and another penny for the paper and envelope, and picked up quite a bit this way. A lot of these men, you see, being old soldiers, occasionally address letters to their former commanding officers, among other people, saying that they are down on their luck and asking for money, and they are glad to have somebody to compose these letters for them. And 'The Lawyer' was one of the best at this game.

"Apropos, I may mention a circumstance

that is of interest. One might expect that sandwichmen, being constantly in the streets, would frequently be the victims of street accidents. As a matter of fact, however, in all the time that I have been in the business, only two of my men have been injured, and in both cases their over-indulgence in the flowing bowl was solely to blame. One of the two men I have mentioned—he was knocked down by a taxi—was hurt hardly at all, he was scarcely more than bruised—but some time afterwards I was astonished to learn that he had obtained one hundred pounds damages from the taxi-cab company. Inquiry revealed the enlightening fact that he had taken proceedings on the advice of 'The Lawyer,' who had 'instructed' him throughout. 'The Lawyer,' whose downfall was due to drink, has now been dead for several years."

Until recently, one elderly man had long figured as a London "sandwicher" under the name of "The Parson." It was not a mere figurative nickname, for the elderly carrier of the "banner" had been an eminently respected vicar in a prosperous English village. His story is full of pathetic human interest.

Though the clergyman himself led a life of perfect rectitude, his son, like the offspring of a good many other divines, failed to heed the precepts which his father both preached and practised. He drank and gambled and misbehaved in many ways, and finally left his home and ran wild in London. For a long time the father managed to keep him out of serious "scrapes," but ultimately, through endorsing some notes for his son's benefit, the vicar was brought to penury and had to sever his connection with the Church.

Leaving his home, "The Parson" came to London to seek employment. But Fortune did not favour him. He could find nothing to do, sank lower and lower, and finally, as a last resort, applied to "Smith of Ham Yard" for employment as a sandwichman. On hearing his name, Mr. Smith referred to his books, and remarked casually that there was another man in the "brigade" bearing the same name. He turned out to be "The Parson's" son. It was arranged that they should be put into the same corps, and for many months they paraded the London streets together, father and son tramping along in all sorts of weather carrying the "banner" on their shoulders.

Mr. Smith became interested in the couple, and discovering that the son was a clever artist, encouraged him to develop his talent, with the result that he produced some excellent landscapes for which Mr. Smith undertook to find a market. This looked like a splendid opportunity for the son to extricate himself and his father from their position in the underworld. But alas for human frailty! "The Parson's" son borrowed a considerable sum of money, ostensibly for the purpose of getting his pictures framed, and decamped, taking the paintings with him. Overcome by this last disaster, the father suddenly disappeared from the "brigade," leaving no trace.

Another humble carrier of the "banner" in London was once a moneyed man in the City. A quarter of a century ago he lived in Manchester Square and drove a carriage and pair about the West-end. To-day he wears a drooping moustache, which is growing white, as a sort of disguise, for he often has to trudge past the fashionable club of which he was once a member. He lost his fortune in some commercial enterprise.

Another victim of circumstances who has long worked as a sandwichman was once a prominent London architect. He was wont to dine daily at one or another of the great London restaurants, being a familiar figure at Princes' and the Trocadero. He lost his fortune, and then his health, and at last came down to the "banner." Every day this man passes within a few paces of his former fashionable haunts. Occasionally he disappears from the "brigade," but always turns up again. It is presumed that these periods of mysterious disappearance are due to the aid of some sympathetic friend who attempts to rescue him. An uncontrollable failing—"the cup that cheers"—however, always gets the better of him, and so the pitiful tragedy goes on.

"You see that man leaning against the wall," said Mr. Smith, as he stood at his window and pointed down to the huddle of unfortunates waiting for "assignments." "He was once one of the most prominent policemen in the London Force, in the direct line of promotion.

A STORY WITHOUT WORDS.

"TO-DAY HE WEARS A DROOPING MOUSTACHE AS A SORT OF DISGUISE, FOR HE OFTEN HAS TO TRUDGE PAST THE FASHIONABLE CLUBS OF WHICH HE WAS ONCE A MEMBER."

We have had numbers of ex-policemen here at one time or another. A man has often said to me, 'Don't send me out now, guv'nor, please; there's a sergeant standing at the crossing who used to know me when I was in the Force. He doesn't know I've come down to this.'

"You would scarcely credit some of the applications we have. Besides professional men, we frequently have clerks who have occupied good positions, and also a smattering of ex-actors and railway officials, together with a fair number of representatives of the Army and Navy."

Pointing down the yard, he indicated men who had figured in such walks of life. One with broad shoulders, an iron-grey beard and piercing eyes, wearing a peaked cap, seemed to stand out from a group of slouching, slope-shouldered figures.

"That man was the master of a ship," explained Mr. Smith. "He lost one of his vessels, was not reinstated, and took to drink. He does not drink now; food is hard enough for him to get. Being too old to go to sea as a common sailor, there was nothing for him to do but go on the streets. He might have got into some sailors' home, but he seemed to resent the suggestion. He prefers making a few shillings a day to being supported by charity. We have several former Navy men with us now, two of whom were midshipmen."

It has been mentioned that, as sandwichmen walk through the streets, they always keep their heads bent down, their eyes upon the ground. There is an object in this. They are seeking in the gutter, the roadway, or the pavement for some object which may bring temporary emancipation to them. No unconsidered trifle escapes them. Like birds of prey, they ever watch the moving platform of the ground. Occasionally something glistens. There is a sudden swoop on the part of the sandwichman. In his hand he holds a coin, or perhaps a purse. If it be a small coin, the nearest "pub" will receive it. But if the sum found be fairly large, the sandwichman sometimes—not always—disappears from his ordinary haunts until the last penny of it is spent.

Considerable sums have been found by sandwichmen. One of them, some years ago, picked up a purse containing fifty pounds in banknotes. He was not conscience-stricken over his find, and did not promptly report his good luck to the police. Being of a generous nature, he "treated" most of his mates in the "brigade," and for nearly a week his employer found some difficulty in fulfilling his advertising contracts with sober sandwichmen. Another lucky fellow found a jewelled cigar-case. It was lying in the gutter in front of the Criterion Theatre, and evidently had been dropped as its owner stepped out of, or into, a cab. The find was not turned in at the "Lost Property Office" at Scotland Yard, where all finds are supposed to be deposited, but was hypothecated at a pawn-shop. When the tatterdemalion sandwicher makes a find like this, he does not himself attempt to pawn the object, but entrusts the business to some one of his mates who happens to have the habiliments of better days laid by, or who has been supplied with such for some special job, and whose appearance thus does not lay him open to suspicion.

Among other noteworthy finds among sandwichmen are: a portion of a pearl necklace, value sixty pounds; a gold watch with a seal and a piece of chain, worth twenty-five pounds; and a pocket-book containing thirty pounds in gold.

While a few fortunate sandwichmen who "discover" things make a point of sharing with their less lucky brethren, most of them go off somewhere and enjoy themselves alone. The one who makes a haul does not like it talked about for fear of the police. As these lucky discoveries mean days, sometimes weeks, of freedom from tramping the streets, the finders fail to see the ethical advantage of foregoing a period of rest and liberty, combined sometimes with enjoyment and oblivion purchased at so much the pint.

Once in a while, even better strokes of luck befall sandwichmen than merely finding valuables in the public streets. Several of them have come into inheritances, sometimes after years of "carrying the banner." One man a few years ago inherited a valuable estate. With the boards on his back, he was about to march out of the yard one morning when he was called into the office and informed of his good fortune. Gravely divesting himself of his advertising matter, he shook hands all round, and straightway disappeared from the scene of his days of stress and hardship.

A VERY EFFECTIVE FORM OF ADVERTISEMENT, BUT ONE DEPENDING FOR ITS SUCCESS ON THE SANDWICHMEN KEEPING AT EQUAL DISTANCES FROM ONE ANOTHHR.

"You may say, however, 'once a sandwichman, always a sandwichman,'" remarked Mr. Felton, in speaking of similar cases. "For some time, a few years ago, I had a man working for me who quite evidently had been used to better things. All of a sudden he disappeared. Some time afterwards, I was stopped near my office by a distinguished-looking individual, who asked me if I remembered him. I failed to do so until he recalled the nickname by which he had previously been known—'Silent.' He was immaculately dressed, and explained that he had come into possession of eighty thousand pounds. That was the last I saw of him until two years later, when I noticed him back in the crowd of sandwichmen again. I was amazed, and asked him what had happened.

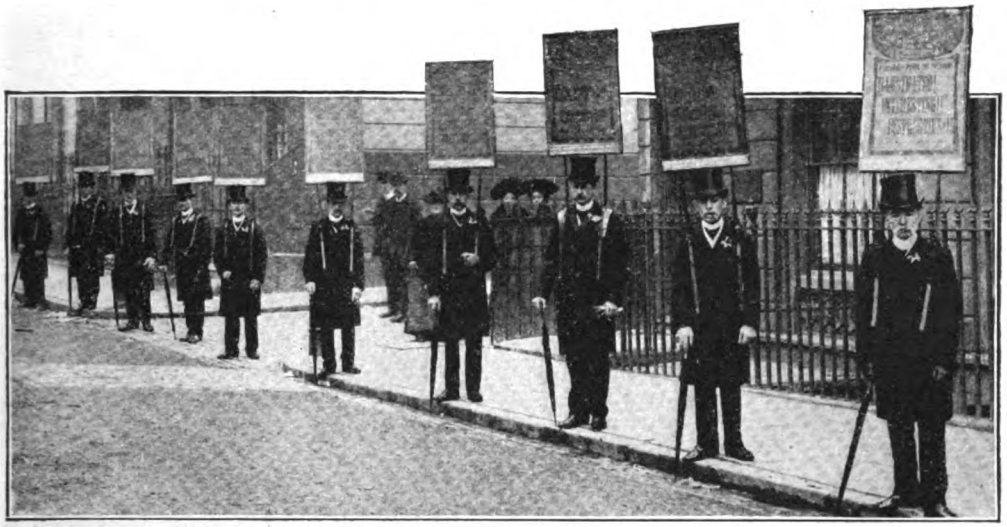
"'That's my business,' he replied, and went away. He never put in an appearance again, and what he is doing I do not know."

The Great War affected the "sandwich" trade just as it did every other.

"Many of our sandwichmen," said Mr. Smith, "were Reservists, and at once rejoined the Colours. So many of them did, in fact, that for a considerable time it was difficult, if not impossible, to fulfil contracts. Before the war, the number of London sandwichmen was about three thousand. To-day I doubt if there are more than a thousand.

"How many men do I employ? Well, the greatest number I ever used on one job was one thousand two hundred, whom I employed

DISPLAYS OF THIS KIND ARE ALWAYS EFFECTIVE, THOUGH WHAT THE SANDWICHMAN THINKS OF THEM IS ANOTHER MATTER!



THE "TOP HAT BRIGADE," WHO ARE USED FOR SPECIAL JOBS. THESE ORNATELY-GOT-UP MEN ARE THOSE WHO PAWN THE ARTICLES FOUND BY THEIR HUMBLER BRETHREN.

for three weeks, upon instructions from Mr. Hooper, the American advertising man, to advertise the *Times* 'Encyclopædia.' In order to get so many men I had to seek assistance from almost every one of my *confrères* in the trade, and even so I had difficulty in 'delivering the goods.' Another of my biggest jobs consisted of supplying a great number of sandwichmen to advertise the dramatic productions that were made here some years ago by Mr. E. H. Sothern, the American actor. His press agent was what they call on the other side of the Atlantic a real 'live wire.' He had all the sandwichmen dressed in mediæval costumes, put them with their boards on tops of specially-engaged omnibuses, and drove them all round town. All went well until they reached the City. There an ordinance forbids any form of 'vehicular advertising,' and the City police promptly pounced on the procession and took the names and addresses of a number of the men. The newspapers, of course, made much of the incident, and thus the thing was even a better advertisement than Mr. Sothern's press agent had hoped for in his wildest dreams.

"London sandwichmen," Mr. Felton went on, "wear all sorts of costumes at different times. Everybody has seen them rigged out in towels to advertise Turkish baths, as Chinamen and American convicts to advertise theatrical attractions, as 'Charlie Chaplins,' and in many other *rôles*. For the purpose of advertising a certain play, we rigged one venerable 'sandwicher' up in the most correct West-end outfit—silk hat, morning coat, and all the rest of it; and to everybody's surprise, when this operation was completed, he looked almost the double of a well-known theatrical manager. As it happened, this manager chanced to see the sandwichman, spotted the likeness to himself, and, convinced that the thing was intentional, and that the intention was to ridicule him, made an embittered complaint to us. To appease him, we selected another man for the 'part.'

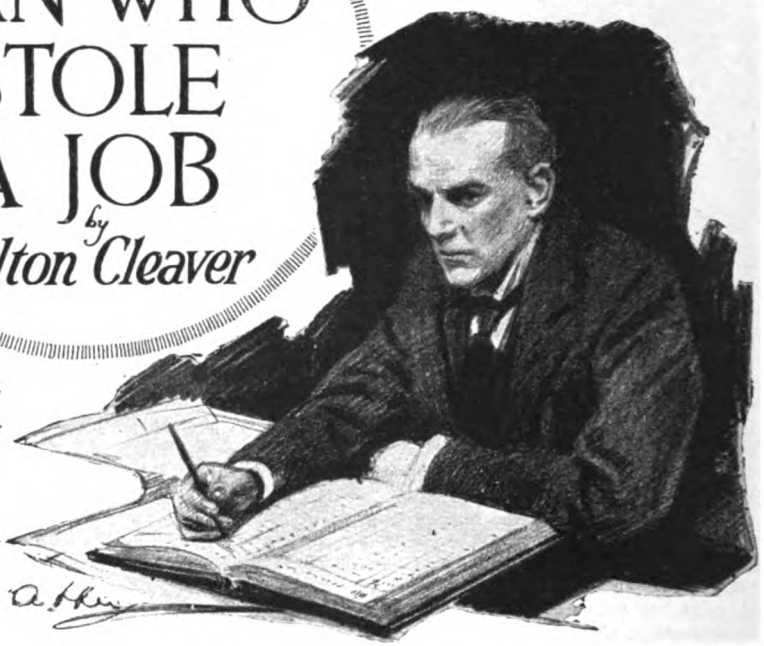
"Every year, upon the occasion of the King's birthday, the sandwichmen of London telegraph their congratulations to His Majesty, and these are always graciously acknowledged. Some years ago," said Mr. Felton, "when the King's birthday was drawing nigh, one of our men suggested that it would be a graceful act if the sandwichmen of London added their congratulations to the thousands that His Majesty receives, and his fellow-sandwichers warmly welcomed the idea. Accordingly, I put their good wishes in the form of a telegram, and every year since, at their request, have done the same, and a prompt acknowledgment is always forthcoming from Lord Stamfordham.

'The pay of sandwichmen is not on a luxurious scale, though it has more than doubled within recent years. A few years ago," said Mr. Felton, "the rate was not much more than a shilling a day; but now we pay our men half a crown, and frequently more for special jobs. It has sometimes been urged that sandwichmen should be abolished on the ground that their presence in the streets is degrading, as perhaps it is. But if they were forbidden to follow this calling, what would be the result? Why, simply that most of them, deprived of the only sort of livelihood that they are able to earn, would either become beggars or enter the workhouses and simultaneously become a charge upon the rates."

The MAN WHO STOLE A JOB

by Hylton Cleaver

ILLUSTRATED BY S. ABBEY



1.

THE Mean Man rose from his stool. He was a hollow-chested fellow, with high-set shoulders and scanty hair. His tight lips and his cold eyes greatly helped the girl at the end of the room to hate him, but she hated him most because he was mean. Being mean was the thing he did best.

The girl at the end of the room saw him now and was immediately afraid. She was afraid because she had a secret, and the Mean Man knew everybody's secrets. He found them out. He was that kind. And you never knew he had found out yours till he made some odd remark, in a cold, still voice, that was meaningless to everybody else but you; and then, when he saw that you understood, a look of narrow satisfaction would make its way slowly into his eyes, and he would stand a moment watching you with a scarcely perceptible smile, and finally he would walk away.

He came now to the desk of the girl who was afraid, and stood there a moment looking up the room; then he suddenly said, with a kind of snarl :—

"It's easy to go. What sacrifice has he made? He'll only get out of stopping here after hours for nothing. And perhaps he'll make a better soldier than he did a clerk, anyway."

The girl looked at him and she hoped that her look was blank.

"He'll do some fool thing and be killed," declared the Mean Man, "and then they'll stick his name on the wall in pretty colours and say that the fool thing was glorious. And he'll have six foot of new-turned earth on top of him if he's lucky, and if he isn't, he'll rot in the sun. Either way he'll never know; and nobody here will care whether his name's on the wall or not."

He looked at her searchingly.

Then he saw that he was right, so he made a suitable pause and went away.

The Mean Man knew her secret. She would care.

Thus when the manager sent for him presently and said :—

"Look here, Traill, Miss Castle has been to ask if she can do Barry's work. Can she do it?" he was ready with his answer. "No," said he, "she can't; she's a great deal too stupid. There's too much cash to be handled—all the money that comes in the mail." And as if on an afterthought, he added: "Besides, where's the need? I'm going to do Barry's job."

The other looked at him in surprise.

"You?"

"Certainly. I'm the only one who understands it, and I can do it in addition to my own."

The manager was in some ways rather a dunce. He seemed not to comprehend. So the Mean Man made it transparently clear to him.

"Well," said the manager, at last, "perhaps you're right. I doubt whether one man *can* do two men's work; still, you can try."

Marion knew on the morrow, and the bitter disappointment made her so angry that at last she went up boldly to him and said: "You wouldn't let me do Mr. Barry's work. You wouldn't give me a chance. You say you'll do it yourself; just as if he'd never had anything much to do. What will happen when *you* join the Army? There'll be nobody then who knows anything about it at all."

He looked up sharply; the dry, tight skin of his face drawn two ways in a spiteful smile. "I was never intended for a soldier," said he, "and I am not mad-headed enough to try and imitate one."

Frank amazement showed in her voice.

"But they want every man they can get. Mr. Barry was turned down twice. They've taken him now. Do you mean to say that you are going to stay at home whatever happens?"

He shrugged his shoulders affirmatively. There was no need to tell her it was the other's going which had made him finally decide to stay.

He looked at her oddly once, and then he turned away, and only his high-set shoulders were visible for a moment as he dipped his head over a ledger; and she found herself comparing him to some stupid sort of bird drinking at a pool. But she understood. The Mean Man was deep; and he had a secret of his own; she had tumbled upon it. Instinct told her so. He was playing a part; he had another reason for wanting to do Barry's work himself. He was going to show that Barry was not a necessity to the firm at all. He was going to prove that he was a mere extravagance. He was going to do two men's work, and then, when Barry came back, they would shake him warmly by the hand and say in sobbing accents that they were truly sorry, but owing to a rearrangement of the work they really had nothing good enough to offer him. Wouldn't he rather take a post elsewhere?

And this Mean Man would get the kudos of saving the firm several hundred pounds a year, and he would be ear-marked for the manager's chair. The suddenness with which it came to her made her draw in her breath once, sharply; and Traill looked up and saw the quick challenge in her eyes. She was going to fight him, then? Yes, she was. She would fight now, and all the time, for Barry.

Whatever the firm thought, she would see her man did not lose his job; and if they wouldn't let her keep it going for him, she would make it as hard as any one girl could for Traill.

Traill saw her meaning, and his set face told her that in that case there were a great variety of ways in which he could be very mean to her indeed.

When Barry came up on week-end leave and met her in town, she told him. She had not included it in her letters, because she felt she could tell it better holding his coat-sleeve.

"I wouldn't miss you so much," she said, "if I could only work on books that seemed —sort of friendly—with your handwriting. He's just a thief. He's found out our secret somehow and robbed us of that, and now he's going to steal your job. Do you think if we let them know that I'm—going to wait for you, they'd let me do the work for you, then?"

Barry soothed her with laborious pawing movements, and slowly shook his head.

"No," said he. "Don't tell them anything. Traill may not really know. Perhaps he only guesses. Let's keep that our own secret, anyway. You see, if I shouldn't come back, and people knew about it, they'd expect you never to laugh again—and all that. Even now they'd be peering at you all day to see how you took my going."

"I wanted to carry on for you," said she.

He nodded.

"I wanted you to myself. Perhaps they'll alter their mind. Traill won't be able to stick it long——"

He came up twice for other week-ends and once for a final leave. Then he went; and she was left altogether alone. Afterwards there were only letters. And in letters she felt that she ought to write only what was cheerful, wherefore she kept her stern forebodings to herself.

The Mean Man fought in a sly way. He locked up Barry's books at night. He went out to lunch when Marion went, and was back before her in case he might find her prying into the mystery of the figures, and whenever she came towards him he used to turn with high-drawn shoulders and stand in her way.

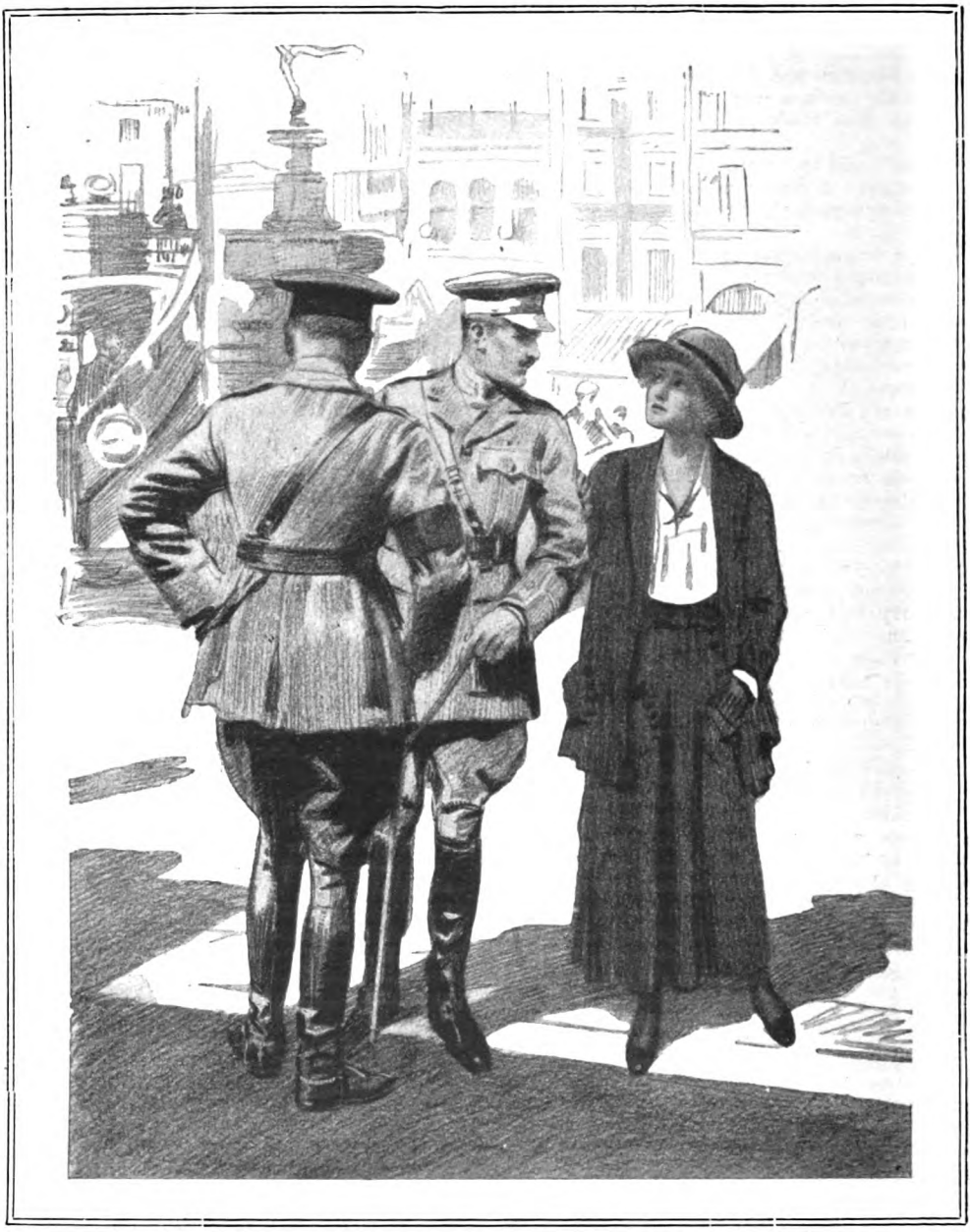
At last there came days when the battles in France were going against us, and such men as were still in England living at their ease were pointed out by people who passed them in the street. And in these black hours the Mean Man went again to answer his name.

The three old men who were the tribunal looked at him searchingly.

He came across the room hat in hand, stooping a little, his feet noiseless upon the carpet, and somehow he seemed uncannily in keeping with that sepulchral atmosphere; for he had come to plead.

He stopped beside them and began to speak. His tone was husky, and there was anxiety somewhere close behind it; a sort of fear that even now he might be sent to fight.

"The manager of my firm is here," he said, "to tell you that I am the only man eligible for any kind of military service at all who is still employed by them, and they are applying for my exemption on the grounds that I am



"'OH,' HE BEGAN. 'YOU? WHAT IS IT? GOT A DAY OFF?'"

indispensable." He paused and made his big point. "I am doing two men's work."

He looked at them. They were exchanging muttered words. He believed he was going to fail at last. Sudden panic seized him. They didn't understand. They had no idea at all what it would mean. He could not get the image out of his mind of that girl who was fighting him so and who was waiting to step so swiftly into his shoes if he were taken. He began to speak again. First with a gentle plausibility, then more strongly. He told them of his invalid mother and of the requirements of her malady which a separation allowance would not be sufficient to buy, and he drew attention to his own ill-health. He was in any case classed category B . . .

And then at last they came to their decision and turned to him.

"Four months' extension," said one, "and another medical board meanwhile."

He was back at the office unexpectedly,

and he pushed through the swing doors of the long room and stopped still.

The clerks were all standing in a group around Miss Castle's desk. They were reading something out of a paper, and nobody looked up. His eyes grew bright. He concentrated all his will and stared and stared at the girl. At last she felt his presence and looked up with a start. Their eyes met, and she knew in a moment that he had been exempted yet again. He smiled, and then he moved silently up the room. One by one they all moved away. Only the girl stayed by the paper.

"What is the matter?" said he, at last.

For a moment she was silent; but the news was too much . . . and at last she spoke with breathless satisfaction.

"It's Mr. Barry," said she. "He's done the fool thing. You can read about it here in this paragraph. And he's got the Military Cross."

He made no movement. He still stood watching her.

"He was twice turned down," she reminded him. "They took him at last, and now he's proved his worth. Doesn't that make you feel you'd—better go?"

The Mean Man spoke no word. He turned and, going to his desk, reached out his hands and drew a big book towards him. It had once been Barry's book.

Day by day she watched him. He began to lose ability to work at anything but a dragging pace. Nobody ever knew what time he left the office. Once she had tried to outstay him; it was useless; at half-past nine he gave her a direct order to go—and she went. She knew that he could not be sleeping well at night; she did not know that he spent half each night in a chair with insomnia.

She could only guess very roughly how long he would be able to do two men's work.

II.

THE price of hats suddenly ceased to matter. Marion spun on her heel and stared with wide eyes. She could not have mistaken the voice anywhere in the world.

Two officers were standing on the kerb waiting for a chance to cross Piccadilly Circus. One was daubed here and there with red, and Marion did not know him. The other was a Second Lieutenant, complete with Military Cross, and it was Barry.

Next moment Marion's hand was upon his arm.

He turned with a jumpy movement and lifted his hand quickly to his cap; then slowly held it out and took hers. And at last he managed to smile.

"Oh," he began. "You? What is it? Got a day off?"

"I've been shopping," said she. "I'd no idea—whenever *did* you come?"

He paused, and seemed to be searching for words. At last he made a muttered excuse to the "twopence coloured" man and drew her aside.

"I got my leave and came home the day before yesterday," he began, "only I'm staying with that fellow's people. He's a man I was at school with and he's on the Divisional Staff. He may do me a power of good, you see, so——"

It was no use. Her heart was beating excitedly. She had to ask:—

"But why ever didn't you tell me? Why didn't you let me know you were coming? I never guessed. I——"

He tried to soothe her.

"I was going to drop you a line, only while I'm a stranger at this fellow's house I can't very well go out with anyone else. You see——"

She did not see. The thing seemed hopelessly absurd.

"Come and lunch with me to-morrow," he said, at last. "I'll meet you at that corner—you know. I've a lot to say. Will you come?"

She began to speak. There was so much she did not understand. . . . All at once she felt strangely alone. He had waved his hand to her. He had gone.

Understanding came to her slowly. It was true that the mail from France had been very bad lately.

It had seemed reasonable enough to Marion at the time. Other people had spoken of the bad mail, too; the only difference lay in the fact that when other people had received letters at all, they had had several at once all from the same person and written on different days; sometimes they even came out of order. In Barry's case half of them had presumably never come at all. She wondered how often he had written.

She went blindly on; suddenly found she was walking the wrong way altogether; turned vexedly.

The afternoon was irremediably spoilt.

He was a pig, anyway.

Whatever excuse he had, whatever excellent idea was in his mind, he was a pig.

There was another thing.

She was uncannily sure of it.

Somehow or other the Mean Man would know; and next time she saw him, there would be a sarcastic smile on his lips. If there was, she would clench her fist and punch him in the face. She felt like that. She wouldn't be able to stop herself.

As a matter of fact she was mistaken. When she came to the office next morning, the Mean Man wasn't there. "He fainted yesterday," they told her, "and Mr. Grey took him home in a cab. The caretaker downstairs says that he hasn't left the office before eleven any night this week."

She didn't tell Barry that at lunch. She didn't feel inclined to tell him anything at all. All she wanted to know was why he hadn't told her he was coming, or at least why he hadn't wired to her when he had come.

He took great pains over his explanation. He even repeated himself several times for fear of not saying enough. And when he stopped and

"SHE DID NOT KNOW WHERE TO LOOK, AND ALL THE WHILE SHE KNEW HE WAS STARING AT HER, WONDERING HOW SHE WAS TAKING IT."

she still didn't answer, but only sat with her chin in her hand looking at his waistcoat, he began to say it all over again, in a different way.

But it all came to the same thing.

"I was never meant for a clerk," he said. "That's it. I was meant for the Army." He paused.

"I may be able to work it so that I shall stay in the Army after the war," he said; "although they turned me down twice, I'm in now, and I reckon I can stay in, with the right influence behind me; and they're going to make the Army more of a paying game after the war. This man Sinclair is going to help me. His father is a General. We were the best of pals at school. So I've got to keep in with the family. We took his sisters out last night."

He looked up at her and began to fondle his chin.

"You see what I mean?"

She saw clearly. The world was suddenly tumbling about her ears. She had fought to keep him his job, and now that the Mean Man was beaten, and had been taken home in a cab, and she would be winning it back for him at last, he didn't want it. It was hard to analyze her feelings. She did not want to cry. She did not want to kick. She wanted to go away, at once, and be left absolutely alone for hours and hours.

"Then you'll never come back to the office?"

She wanted to feel quite sure.

He spread his hands.

"If Trail's taken on my job, what's the use?" he said. "Best thing is to look out for another one."

He did not understand. He would never know how she had watched over his interests in that beastly office, and how near she was now to winning the fight. He did not understand. What was the use of telling him?

"I want to stay in the Army," said he again.

She collected herself for an effort.

"But the pay is so poor," she whispered, at last; "and if you do — what about — what about me?"

He leaned back in his chair.

"Well," he said, at last, "there's — there's nothing really between us, is there? We're both—free."

She suddenly saw light; the secret.

She understood now why he had so wanted nobody to know. It was not for her sake at all. It was just as much for his: he had not wanted to be tied. She had kept his secret and he could say now that he wasn't.

"Of course," she whispered. "You're free."

She did not know where to look. She glanced over his shoulder, down at her gloves, up at the windows; and all the while she knew he was staring at her, wondering how she was taking it.

When she could stand it no longer, she stood up.

"I think I'll be going," said she.

He made no answer. He stood up, too, and watched her go. Then he sat down and lit a cigarette in greater comfort.

"There's no knowing when he'll turn up again," the manager had said. "Perhaps he'll come back to morrow. He may have had a real breakdown —a six weeks' affair. I'm going to give you the trial you wanted, anyway. I shall tackle most of the correspondence myself. I want you to start on Mr. Barry's books. Do your best to pick up the work. You've got intelligence, and if you can help us out of the hole we're in, we shall not overlook your merit. Will you try?"

She had nodded her head. It might occupy her mind. But if this was victory, the taste was as bitter as defeat.

Now she sat at the desk that had once been his, her head propped in her hand, her eyes moving slowly up and down the figures. She had turned back page after page, trying to make sure how the books had been kept. It was hard

to take interest in them, but she had done the best she could with the day's mail, and now she was looking up old accounts.

She came upon it suddenly.

Never afterwards could she tell how first she made that amazing discovery. One might have studied the big book and the little book and the files and the letters all day and all night and never traced the difference. Yet in one listless moment her eye had lighted by chance upon mathematics that could not be.

She was alone. The other clerks had all left by degrees. And there she sat staring first at one book and then at the other, noticing neither the silence of the great room nor the passing time. And finally she sat back with a little sob, and found herself whispering it aloud.

"They're faked."

She jumped to her feet, and looked round the empty desks. There was nobody she could tell, nobody she could ask to check these figures. She was absolutely alone.

"That's why he wanted the books. He knew what he could do with them. He meant to do it all the time. That's why he locked them up. He wouldn't let anyone see them. He wouldn't let me help. He was faking them all the while." She turned and half stretched out a hand. Her lips moved.

"Oh, Noel—Noel, man, come and see what he's done with your books!"

The walls did not so much as wink at her. So she stood, an almost tragic figure, waiting and wondering, and, most of all, unutterably alone.

Then suddenly there sounded a creak upon the stairs outside. Somebody was coming. She listened intently, in half belief that Noel was really coming back to her again. Then the door opened and a man stood on the threshold. The collar of his coat was turned up, and his high-set shoulders were stooping a little as if with some invisible burden.

The Mean Man had come back. To anyone in the world but Marion, he would just then have looked a little pathetic.

He did not seem surprised to see her, and at first he evidently did not understand that it was too late. He came slowly, even a little unsteadily, up the room; and he spoke no word. Only when he reached his desk, he took off his hat and laid it on one side; then slowly began to unbutton his overcoat just as if he had come at the proper time in the morning. To all intents and purposes he might not have noticed her at all. But she saw that he was deathly pale, that his eyes were very tired, and that when at last he lifted them and looked at her fixedly they had lost that piercing strength that had used to frighten her so.

She faced him boldly, her back to Barry's books, as if protecting them from his thieving pen.

Then he bent his head and looked at each book in turn, and when he saw where each lay open, he glanced at her sorrowfully.

"Have you been—trying to learn the work?" he said, at last.

She nodded her head; she could not trust herself to speak.

"And did you—grasp it?"

Again she nodded.

"Everything?"

"Everything."

So they understood each other at last.

"It doesn't matter," said she; and didn't guess that her voice seemed strange to him. "You haven't harmed Mr. Barry. He's not coming back."

He did not seem interested. He was looking straightly at the open books.

"Isn't he?"

"No, never. He's going to stay a soldier."

He turned slowly and looked at her.

"Then what," said he, "what is going to happen to you?"

For a moment there was silence. Then her proud anger broke out with vehement fury in sudden fierce contempt. She did not punch him in the face. She lashed him unmercifully with her tongue, and as he stood before her, his high-set shoulders made him seem to be bowing his head before the storm.

"You are the meanest man I know," she said at last, and he knew she was nearly sobbing with contempt. "What have my affairs to do with you? You stole another man's job just to—to make money—and as you couldn't make enough that way—you—you faked his accounts.'!

He made no answer at first. His whole attention seemed to be held by the open books. He was still staring at them dully.

"And Mr. Barry," said he, "is never coming back?"

"No," she snapped, "he isn't. Why did *you?*"

"I came back to try to save you, but it seems too late."

"To save *me?*"

He nodded his head.

"How far back have you traced those gradual—adjustments?" His voice was jerky. He was obviously ill.

She did not quite understand him.

"I wondered," said he, "because if you trace them all the way back you will see what they are doing."

"What *are* they doing?"

"They are slowly putting right a big wrong."

The Mean Man reached out a hand and began to turn back the pages of the nearest book. She turned and watched him as he pointed out an item here and there

"You must go back a long way," said he, eventually. "You are right so far, you see—these are all mine. But if you refer to the old book, the one in the pigeon-hole, and check page 504 by the file, and the petty cash—you will find that all these amounts have been gradually balancing the money—Barry stole."

He spoke wearily, without emotion, almost as if he were disappointed in her for not having seen so obvious a thing. At last he looked at her again, and she was rigid.

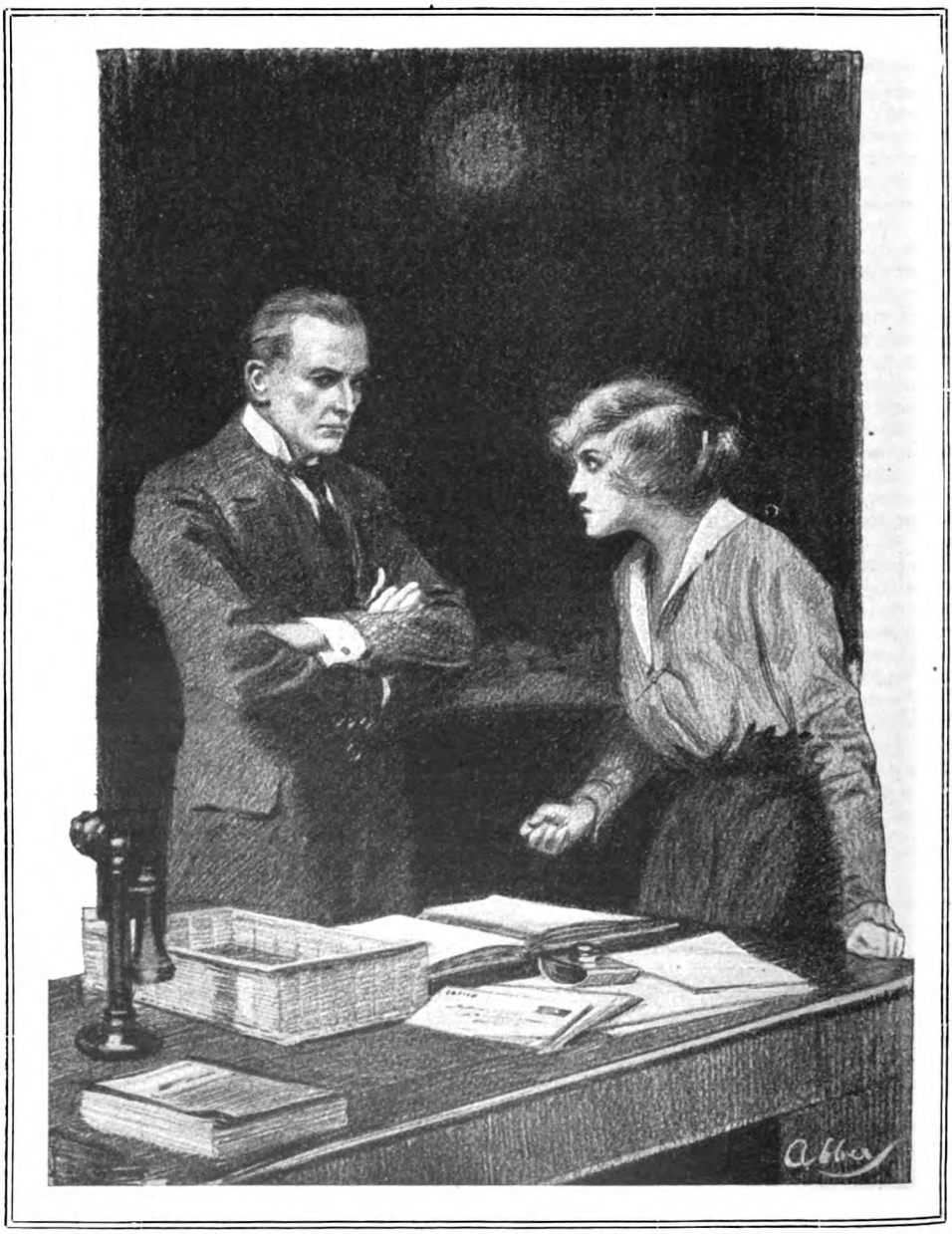
It seemed that everything had died within

her—hope, love, even hatred. Her eyes were wide, but they were staring unseeingly.

"You found that all these amounts did not agree," said he. "You had not the time—or else you did not know enough, to find out why. These heavily-inked figures are not all incorrect. Most of them are right, as a matter of fact. But a great deal of the money has only been paid in out of my pocket."

She looked up at him dully. His tight, dry skin was drawn in a characteristically bitter smile, but somehow his face no longer looked mean. It merely bespoke a man who was very lonely. It did not occur to her to doubt him. He spoke too wearily to be deceiving her; and he seemed not to care whether she believed or not. At last she put the only question that occurred to her in a cold, dry voice.

"What will happen, then," said she, "when the auditors go through the books?"



"'YOU ARE THE MEANEST MAN I KNOW,' SHE SAID, AND HE KNEW SHE WAS NEARLY SOBBING WITH CONTEMPT. 'YOU STOLE ANOTHER MAN'S JOB JUST TO MAKE MONEY, AND AS YOU COULDN'T MAKE ENOUGH THAT WAY—YOU—YOU FAKED HIS ACCOUNTS!'"

"The auditors will be satisfied," said he. "The accounts will balance. If the firm are not content they will be told that Barry has been steadily paying back all he appropriated. They will not be out of pocket, and Barry will not be coming back. What else could they want?"

"But why have you kept it to yourself so long? Why have you let nobody know? What was the object? You never liked Mr. Barry?"

"I knew him too well to like him," said the Mean Man.

"But why have you never given him away? Why have you worked yourself to death to keep this secret?"

"To keep it from you," said he. She made a petulant gesture.

"He wanted me to do the work," she answered. "He must have known I should find it out."

"He thought that if you did, you would keep silent because you loved him. It was of me that he was afraid. He thinks now that I am only waiting till he comes back from the war to confront him with these books. Well, he is not coming back. He is not going to face it."

He made a sudden gesture of sincerity.

"Why didn't I tell you? You were in love with him. And if he had been convicted—it would have broken your heart." He paused. She saw him move to a stool and wearily sit down.

There were no other lights in the room but those shadowed lamps over the desk; and they were lighting up the pallor of his thin, sharp-featured face, and throwing the shadow of his high-set shoulders upon the floor around her feet.

"I didn't want your heart to be broken," said he.

She did not ask why. No words would come.

"My real, cold-blooded meanness," he added, "lay in the fact that I deceived you into thinking I hated the sight of you. It will pay one man to be conspicuously a fool—it paid me to be contemptuously mean. I am a bitter man. I have had little in life to make me anything else. I have been tied to an invalid mother and two sisters more bitter than I ever since I first found work. I am afraid my mother will die very soon; my sisters are talking of going away together to live in rooms. I shall be left completely alone, broken in health, and known to every other man as a shirker in the war. I could not have fought—I could only have scavenged. It was better to stay here. It pays me to seem mean. It hides the fact that I am one of the most sentimental men who ever lived."

She made a slight sound that was almost a word of pity.

He stood up.

"I thought I might be in time, but I was too late. I would like to have spared you this—to the very end."

"It doesn't matter," said she, "I——"

She could not say any more. She saw him putting on his overcoat, and picking up his hat; she wanted terribly to say some little word of understanding. Nothing would come.

He lifted his hat to his head.

"I should go home," said he, "if I were you. It's getting late. I shall come back to-morrow."

She moved one hand slightly towards him.

"Will you let me help you—when you come back?"

He looked just faintly surprised.

"You don't still want to keep his job for him," said he. "He'll never come back."

"It's *you* that I want to help."

He paused. His face was hardly set; the tight, dry skin of it was drawn like parchment. The test of his life had come.

He wanted more than anything else in the world to speak. It was now or never. To-morrow it would be too late. He would be back in his groove, a mean man, hated and embittered. This one moment he would be true to himself. He could never make her happy. Had he only been fit, strong, rich—had he not been sure that all the world would turn a cold shoulder to the girl who married him, he might, perhaps, have spoken. It were better to take the harder road. He neither shook his head nor nodded, nor did he speak one word. He took up his stick and turned. For a moment he paused. In that moment the man who had deceived the whole of his little world into believing he was mean, displayed his greatness. He went slowly down the long room and out through the darkness about the door. The girl stood watching until she had seen the last of his stooping shoulders.

She knew that in the morning he would be once again what he had always seemed to be—the meanest man she knew. That would be too late. She sat down and buried her face in her hands, and over Barry's books she cried.

The man walked slowly into the night.

For once in his life he had not been mean. He had not taken his opportunity. He wondered whether she understood.

She was a woman, and of course she did.

TRY THESE TESTS ON YOURSELF.

Can you stand on one foot with your eyes closed ?
Can you walk a straight line with eyes shut ?
How long can you hold your breath ?
These and other tests explained in this article.

By K. SUMNER.

Some of the wonderful facts about our ears, eyes, sense of direction, and power to detect motion are explained in the following article. They were revealed by the tests given to aviators by the Air Medical Service, some of whose officers have read and approved this article.

NEVER before, in the same length of time, have so many human beings been put through a rigid examination, mental, moral, and physical, as in America during the past two years. The work was done by the Government, chiefly for the army. But the rest of us can try on ourselves many of the tests used, and so can find out how we measure up under them.

Here are some based on those used in the examination of candidates for the aviation corps. I have tried to put them so clearly and simply that any man or woman can make a practical personal use of them.

The physical examination of men for aviation was the most novel one made by the army, and in many ways it was the most severe. A man's very life depended on his fitness. Not only that, but as a mere question of expense, candidates were sifted out with minute care. In war times it costs about eight thousand pounds to train an aviator. Just from a money point of view, therefore, it did not pay to take men who might fail when time came for action.

You probably have no idea of being an aviator just at present—although thousands of persons who have never expected to fly will be doing it within a year or two. But, in any case, these tests will show you some interesting facts about yourself.

For example, you probably think of your ears as simply your organs of hearing. The chances are that you do not know that the ear is a *motion-sensing* apparatus of peculiar delicacy.

The reason is that there are in each ear three semicircular canals, placed at right angles to one another, and containing fluid. Whenever the position of your head is changed you cause some movement of the fluid in one or more of these canals; and these movements *in your ear* are signals to the brain. They send messages by the nerves, and the brain interprets them—tells you what is happening.

You do not have to depend on your eyes to know that you are being turned round, for example. If you are lying in a hammock, with your eyes closed, and somebody swings you, no matter how gently, you will know it. Even if you could be suspended in the air, without touching a thing, and with your eyes shut, you would know instantly—at least, you *should* know—exactly in what direction you were moved. Because the fluid in your ears would be made to flow in one direction or another.

Have you ever been sea-sick, or "train-sick," or dizzy from swinging or from dancing? Have you ever sat bending over your desk, or your sewing, and then felt your head "whirl" when you suddenly lifted it? The reason was that the fluid in one of the ear canals had been shifted abruptly.

One of the questions asked of applicants for the flying corps was whether they had ever been sea-sick. Most of them denied that they had, because they thought that would prove they would not be dizzy in an aeroplane.

As a matter of fact, a person with perfectly normal ears would almost certainly be sea-sick on his first exposure to a rough sea. The reason a "choppy" sea is especially trying is because the motions are so abrupt and change so quickly that there is no chance to recover from one sensation, or to become accustomed to it, before a different one has to be met.

People who never feel the slightest qualms of sea-sickness would not be so patronizing toward their less fortunate companions if they realized that this total absence of qualms is one indication that the ear canals are not normal. This is sometimes the result of typhoid fever, mumps, or some other disease which leaves a centre of infection in the ears. So don't be too proud of your absolute immunity to sea-sickness.

Of course, if you are excessively sensitive to motion, and if you simply cannot get over being sea-sick, no matter how long the voyage is, that also is an indication of some condition which is not normal. In that case, perhaps you have infection somewhere in your body which is "distilling" a poison that causes irritation. Pyorrhœa, for instance, may be indirectly responsible for a sea-sickness which refuses to be conquered.

But that is another story. What we want to realize now is that the ears are keenly affected by motion, and that we become "dizzy" because of the ears as well as because of the eyes. But this dizziness should not last too long. You ought quickly to "orientate" yourself—that is, recover a correct sense of your position—when the motion stops. If you cannot do that, you at least have no business to fly an aeroplane.

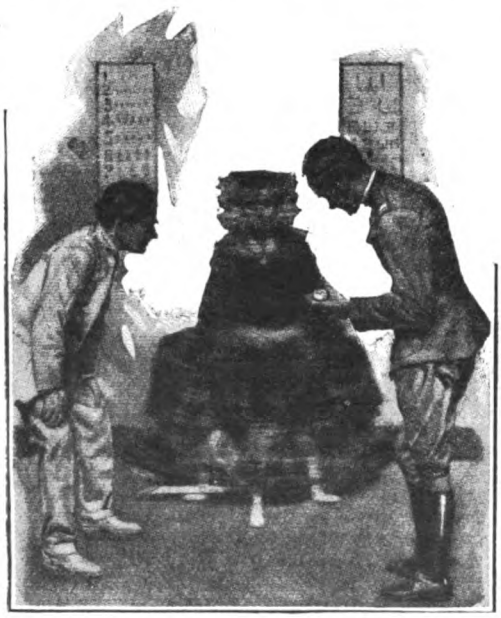
Suppose an aviator wants to straighten out after coming down a thousand feet in a tail spin. If he cannot recover a correct motion sense quickly, he may throw the machine over too far and have an accident. His eyes will not help him; because there are no stationary objects in the air, as there are on the ground.

When a man cannot see the ground beneath him, his *ears* should tell him whether he is pointing up or down, or whether he is side-slipping.

Now suppose you try on yourself some of these motion-sensing tests. Begin with the simplest ones, the so-called static and dynamic tests. In these, the subject is required to stand in one position, with his eyes closed, for *one minute*. Then he must walk twenty feet forward in a straight line. It sounds simple, and yet some persons cannot do it. When they attempt to stand perfectly still they sway backwards and forwards. When they try to walk they swerve to one side.

Get someone to watch you and see what you can do. You will have an inclination to sway. But your ears should warn you of the slightest movement, so that you can correct it instantly. If you sway markedly and vary more than three feet from a straight line when you walk with your eyes closed, you will know that your apparatus for sensing motion is not perfect. You can have several trials, however, because sometimes a person is nervous at first, but can do it all right after a while.

The army has special apparatus for making motion-sensing tests, but you can manage some of the experiments if you have a revolving desk chair, or an old-fashioned piano-stool. You can even try one of the tests any time you ride in a railway train. If you are approaching a station at high speed, close your eyes and observe your sensations. You will feel that you are moving rapidly forward, as you really are. The reason is that the fluid in the ear canals "lags behind" the motion of the carriage you are in. The brain gets that message and knows what it means.



OFFICIAL WHIRLING CHAIR TEST.

NO. 1.—THIS IS GIVEN TO FIND OUT WHETHER THE PERSON CAN SENSE MOTION, AS HE SHOULD, BY THE MOVEMENT OF THE FLUID WHICH IS IN THE INNER CANALS OF THE EAR. YOU CAN TRY THE TEST IF YOU HAVE A REVOLVING-DESK CHAIR, A PIANO-STOOL, OR IF THE CHILDREN HAVE A SWING.

As the train approaches the station it slackens speed. But the fluid in your ear canals—the endolymph it is called—has acquired so much momentum that now it keeps on going and presses *forward*. That is the sensation you normally get when *you* are moving backward. So, although the train has merely slowed down, you will feel as if it is going back. This is a test of motion in a horizontal line. It is perfectly normal that you should have a temporary illusion about the direction in which you are going. But it should not last more than a few seconds.

Another way of testing your reaction to linear motion, this time in a straight line vertically, is by riding in an express lift in a high building. The aviation examiners used this method, the

THE POINTING TEST—BEFORE TURNING.

NO. 2.—CLOSE YOUR EYES AND TOUCH THE FOREFINGER OF THE PERSON IN FRONT OF YOU. RAISE YOUR ARM STRAIGHT UP, THEN BRING IT DOWN, AND TRY TO TOUCH THE FINGER AGAIN. DO THIS WITH EACH HAND. THEN MAKE SOMEONE WHIRL YOU TO THE RIGHT, IF POSSIBLE AT THE RATE OF TEN TIMES IN TEN SECONDS.

lifts selected being capable of making a trip of forty storeys—a distance of four hundred feet—at a maximum speed of one thousand feet a minute. The lift shaft was entirely dark and the lights in the car itself were shut off, so that there would be no information gained through the eyes.

The experiment showed that in normal individuals three sensations were universally felt. During a rapid ascent, all the individuals tested were able to sense accurately the character of the motion. That is, they knew they were going up swiftly. When the speed of the car was slowed a little in the course of the ascent, all of them made the mistake of thinking that it was moving *very* slowly, or that it had stopped entirely. And when, after rising rapidly for part of the distance, the car was reduced to its lowest possible speed, the occupants thought they were actually going down instead of up. These sensations were reversed when the experiments were made in descending.

The same tests were tried on various classes of deaf persons, and showed that, unless their semicircular canals have been destroyed, the deaf have the same power to detect motion which normal persons possess. It has no connection with hearing. Apart from the eyes, we get our ideas of our own motion from the inner canals of the ear and from what is called "deep-muscle sense."

For instance, when you are going up in a lift the floor of the car seems to press on the soles of your feet. When it suddenly drops, your feet scarcely seem to touch the floor. In other words, the sensation in the muscles of your feet help you to know how you are moving. If you are speeding in your motor-car you are pressed against the back of the seat, and that would tell you, if nothing else did, that you are going forward.

But if your ear is normal it will tell you anyway, without help from the muscles. To prove this, close your eyes and stand on one foot. It will be rather hard to keep your balance; but if your ear-canals are on their job you should be able to do so. A person whose inner canals have been destroyed, however, cannot stand on one foot if his eyes are closed. His brain gets no message to tell him that he is toppling over.

Some of the most interesting tests given to aviators are those for vertigo. When a person's sensation of motion does not agree with the facts it is called vertigo; as, for instance, if he feels as if he were falling when he is not, or if he feels as if he were going round when he is

THE POINTING TEST—AFTER TURNING.

NO. 3.—WHEN THE WHIRLING STOPS, KEEP YOUR EYES CLOSED, AND AFTER THE MAN IN FRONT HAS PLACED YOUR FINGER ON HIS, TRY TO RAISE YOUR ARM STRAIGHT INTO THE AIR. YOU WILL FEEL AS IF YOU ARE TURNING TO THE LEFT, EVEN THOUGH YOU ARE NOT REALLY MOVING AT ALL; AND YOU WILL POINT TO THE RIGHT.

THE POINTING TEST—THIRD POSITION.

NO. 4.—AFTER RAISING YOUR ARM, AS IN NO. 3, BRING IT DOWN AND TRY TO TOUCH THE OBSERVER'S FINGER. YOU WILL PROBABLY BE FROM SIX TO EIGHTEEN INCHES TO THE RIGHT OF HIS HAND. BUT YOU OUGHT TO BE ABLE TO DO IT AFTER THREE ATTEMPTS.

really standing still. It is perfectly normal to have this sensation of a false motion at times; after being rapidly whirled, for instance. But it should not persist longer than about thirty-five seconds. In men selected for aviation it lasted an average of only twenty-six seconds.

There are several ways of determining this vertigo reaction, as it is called; for instance, the pointing and the falling tests. In lieu of a better apparatus you can use the revolving office-chair, the piano-stool, or the swing the children have in the garden. By twisting the ropes of the swing, and then releasing them, the occupant will get a very good imitation of the official whirling chair.

After you have been whirled to the right, with your eyes shut, you will feel, when the motion has actually ceased, as if you are turning in the opposite direction. But you should not continue to have this sensation for more than thirty-five seconds.

To try the pointing test, make someone stand directly in front of you just before the whirling begins and hold out his forefinger, at the length of your arm, in front of you. When you have located the position of the finger, close your eyes, stretch out your hand, and with your own forefinger touch the one held in front of you. Then raise your arm straight in the air and bring it down, trying to touch the finger again. You should be able to do this if your sense of direction is good.

Then make the man in front of you move his finger about eighteen inches farther to the right, and repeat the experiment. Do the same thing with the left hand, trying in each case to register in your memory the exact location of the finger in space. When you have finished this preliminary pointing, you are ready to be whirled.

Of course, your experiment will be very crude compared with the official tests, but it will give you some idea of your ability to sense motion correctly. Shut your eyes and make somebody rotate you on the piano-stool, or in the chair or swing, as rapidly as possible. You should be turned ten times in ten seconds. That is the official requirement. But as you don't have to be an aviator, no harm will be done if your test isn't as exact as that.

When the whirling stops, still keep your eyes closed. The man in front of you must then place your finger in contact with his as he stands directly in front of you. When he has done that, raise your arm straight up and bring it down again, trying to touch his finger again. You will probably be from six to eighteen inches to the right of the mark.

The reason is that the fluid in your ear, the endolymph, has been made to flow to the right; and, even when the whirling stops, it continues to flow in that direction for a while. This makes you feel as if you were turning *to the left.* And when you try to touch the finger in front of you, your hand involuntarily goes off to the right because you feel as if you were moving to the left and have to reach back for the finger. If you have been whirled to the left you will do just the opposite.

This is perfectly normal. It is what is called "normal past-pointing"—that is, you point *past* the object you want to touch, because you feel as if you were turning away from it.

The observer, the man in front of you, must watch your finger when you raise your arm, for you will "past-point" at the top of the swing also. Some men will past-point at the top and then point inward when they bring the hand down. In that case, the pointing at the top is the thing to be noticed, for that is the primary response before it has been altered by subconscious or conscious mental processes.

Now comes the important part: How long does it take you to overcome the feeling that you are going to the left, and to raise your arm in a really straight line and then touch the observer's finger? If you can do this after three attempts with each arm your motion-sensing apparatus is all right. If it takes you longer than that, you are at least below aviation standard.

Here is another test: Sitting in the chair, bend forward at an angle of about ninety degrees, close your eyes, and make someone whirl the chair to the right five times in ten seconds. When it stops, you will again feel as if you were turning to the left; and on sitting up you will think you are falling in that direction. In

trying to overcome this you will actually throw your body to the right. Better have someone there to catch you.

In these tests the whirling is done horizontally. Candidates for aviation were whirled vertically as well; that is, literally head over heels. They had special apparatus, but you can try the test yourself by simply laying your head on your own shoulder, as you sit in the chair. You see, your head is then at the same angle to your whirling as it would be in the "head-over-heels" test. You will find it much more difficult to recover from a vertical whirl than from a horizontal one. In this case you will feel as if you are falling forward, or backward, according to the direction in which you were turned.

Orientation is a very interesting subject, even aside from these whirling tests. Some people seem to have a sixth sense—the sense of direction. They will wander about a strange city for hours, and then go back without trouble to their starting-point. Or they will find their way through a pathless forest in which most persons would be lost in ten minutes. Birds have a marvellous power of orientation, and some animals possess it in a remarkable degree.

The examiners for the aviation corps found that human beings can be roughly divided into seven classes, or types, on this point of their ability to find their way:—

First. The compass type, or those who get their bearings by the four cardinal points of the compass. They think of things as "to the east," or "a little to the south." They are the ones who are always saying, "Let's see! That's north. Well, then, we'll do so and so." They are always remembering streets as running north and south, or east and west.

Second. The mapping type, or the people who instinctively follow an imaginary map which they see in their mind's eye. To them north is always the top of the map; east is at their right, west at their left, and so on. If you tell them that a river, which is in sight, is to the east, they have to think of themselves as standing so that the river is at their right before they can orientate themselves.

Third. The "left and right" type; that is, the people who, after having travelled a route a few times, seem to remember it by "turnings." They go a certain distance and turn to the right, a little farther and turn to the left.

A very curious experiment along this line was made by a scientist who took some white rats and tested their powers of finding their way through a labyrinth or maze. The needed incentive was supplied by feeding them when they reached the centre. They were tried in various ways, blindfolded, and so on. In the case of one group every use of the senses was guarded against by blindfolding, temporarily destroying the sense of smell, cutting off their "whiskers," and benumbing the soles of their feet so that their "deep-muscle sense" would not guide them in turning. And yet, handicapped as they were, these rats, after making the trip a few times, threaded the maze as quickly as the others did.

THE FALLING TEST—BEFORE TURNING.

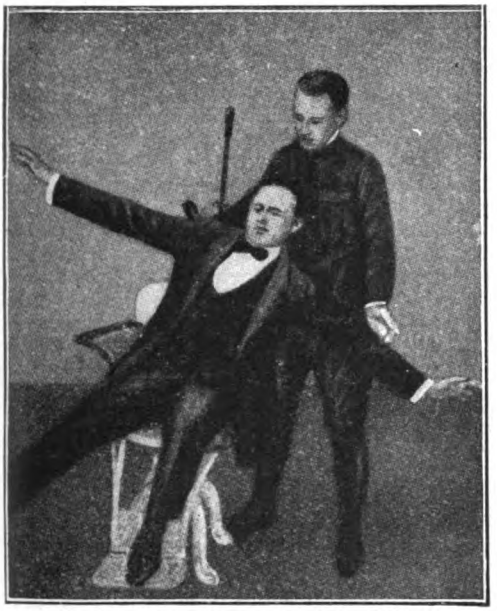
NO. 5.—BEND FORWARD AT AN ANGLE OF ABOUT NINETY DEGREES, THEN MAKE SOMEONE WHIRL YOU FIVE TIMES IN FIVE SECONDS. WHEN THE CHAIR STOPS WHIRLING, KEEP YOUR EYES CLOSED.

They had learned to turn right and turn left when they should.

Fourth. The pathfinding type, which relies upon the recognition of landmarks. In a city with which they are only slightly familiar they pick out certain buildings as guides. In the woods, they look for a familiar tree, or a peculiar rock. They learn a given route by the landmarks; and if you changed these landmarks around, they would be greatly confused. Their sense of direction would not be strong enough to guide them, and they would turn east instead of west, although their instinct, if they were of the first or the second type, should tell them better.

Fifth. The fragmentary type, which is orientated only in certain regions and in certain circumstances. These are the people in whom association plays a great part. Perhaps as children they lived in a town where there was a river to the south. In later life, if they are near a river they involuntarily think of it as to the south. If it does happen to be in that direction, well and good. But if it happens to be in some other direction, they cannot force themselves to feel as if it were. When they try to think of directions, they unconsciously start with the river as south of them.

Sixth. The disorientated type, which includes the people who are always confused and muddled about direction. If they are inside a building they have no idea in which direction outside things are. Take one of these individuals into a large store and ask him in which direction his own home is, and he has no definite idea. He



THE FALLING TEST—AFTER TURNING.

NO. 6.—NOW TRY TO SIT UP. IF YOU HAVE BEEN TURNED TO THE LEFT YOU WILL FEEL AS IF YOU ARE FALLING TO THE RIGHT. AND IN TRYING TO OVERCOME THIS, YOU WILL ACTUALLY FALL TO THE LEFT.

can *go* home because he has learned the way, but he has no " sense " of the relative positions of places in space.

Seventh. The " lost " type—people who entirely lack the instinct of direction and, in addition, pay no attention to compass points, landmarks, or turnings.

Among the tests made in these aviation examinations were those to show the effect of tobacco upon vision, blood pressure, and pulse. The one for keenness of vision was taken every four minutes during smoking, and then compared with the results of the same tests taken before and after smoking. Of sixteen subjects, twelve showed a decrease in acuteness of vision, one showed an increase, and three were not affected either way. But the duration of this loss of keeness of sight, in the seventy-five per cent. which showed it, lasted only a few minutes after they had finished smoking.

Blood pressure increased in sixty-nine per cent. of the tests made during smoking. But here, also, the effect was temporary, lasting only a few minutes. In fourteen of the sixteen cases the pulse-rate showed an increase averaging fourteen beats a minute. Two showed a fall of five beats per minute.

These results came from smoking one cigar. Practically the same results have been produced by the inhalation of one or two cigarettes. But investigations made several years ago showed that the smoking of two cigars caused a rise of blood pressure sometimes lasting two hours. The natural inference is that excessive smoking would produce a fairly constant rise in pulse and blood pressure and a lessened acuteness of vision. The work on the effect of tobacco is as yet incomplete, and deductions cannot be drawn definitely.

Of course, the tests of vision were not confined to those showing the effects of tobacco. You are familiar with many of them through visits to your oculist. But here is one which you can try yourself in regard to your " field of vision." How far to the right and to the left do you see, even when you are looking straight ahead ?

You can find out by this test: Let someone stand facing you, about two feet away. Cover your left eye and, with your right, look straight into his opposite eye. Let him extend his left arm out sideways, so that his hand is *behind* your range of vision. Then let him move his hand forward until you see it. He can ask you whether his fingers are moving or not. But be *sure* that you are looking straight into his eye. You will be tempted to look a little toward his hand. If you can see his fingers when they are practically opposite your ear, that is about all the human eye is capable of. Try the same test for upward and downward range. It is not as great in any case.

To test your ears for hearing, stand twenty feet away from the " observer " and with your back to him. Close one ear by pressing your moistened forefinger firmly into it. The observer must then exhale, and, with the " breath " left in him, *whisper* numbers, words, or sentences, which you must repeat after him. If you cannot hear him at twenty feet, make him come closer, repeating the whispering until he reaches a point where you do hear. But you should be able to do it at twenty feet. If you can hear him at that distance, let him move *farther* away until you find the limit of your hearing ability. Make the test separately for each ear.

The reason for making the observer exhale before whispering is that, if his lungs are filled with air, he can whisper so loudly that it is not a proper test. But with only the " residual " air—that left after exhaling—he cannot do this. Try it yourself and see.

The watch-test for hearing should be made with a loud-ticking one. But as watches vary so much, it is necessary to try each one separately. If five persons with " good ears " hear a watch at a certain distance, take that as the standard to be met. A good tick should be heard at about forty inches. Close your eyes and also close, with your moistened finger, the ear you are not testing.

Some of the most elaborate of the aviation tests were those for the effect produced on a human being by lessening his supply of oxygen. These were necessary because of the high altitudes to which fighting pilots had to go. But even an ordinary man sometimes has to get along on a short ration of oxygen. He must do it if he climbs a mountain, or crosses the ranges on his way to and from California.

The air at sea-level contains twenty-one per cent. of oxygen. The supply decreases as we go up; so that at ten thousand feet we have only about fourteen per cent.; at fifteen thousand

feet, twelve per cent.; at twenty thousand feet, ten per cent.; and, finally, at thirty thousand feet, a mere bagatelle of six per cent. Human beings cannot live on such a limited supply.

Some of them cannot live at even lower altitudes, where "oxygen hunger" makes itself felt. Even though they can live there, they are unable to exert themselves to any great extent. If you go to a much higher elevation than you are accustomed to you will, if you are prudent, avoid taking much exercise for a few days.

The diminished oxygen and low barometric pressure of high altitude cause what is known as "mountain sickness." In some persons this shows itself at comparatively low elevations, especially if they have a weak heart. Some people can go to fourteen thousand or fifteen thousand feet without unpleasant symptoms. But only a very few can venture to nineteen thousand feet without real distress.

The symptoms of mountain sickness last a day or a few days as a rule. If the person has certain kinds of heart trouble or of nervous trouble, he will have to go back to a low elevation, sometimes as quickly as possible, for in severe cases death will ensue if he remains at the high altitude.

A dramatic instance of the effects of going suddenly to a great elevation is found in the experience of Glaisher, a meteorologist, and his assistant, Coxwell, years ago. They were making a balloon ascent, and at twenty-six thousand feet Glaisher found that he could not read his instruments. Then his legs became paralyzed and, very soon afterward, his arms also, although he could still move his head. Next his sight failed entirely, then his hearing: and finally he lost consciousness completely.

In the meantime, Coxwell discovered that his own arms were paralyzed. But with his teeth he managed to pull the cord which opened the gas-valve, and the balloon began to descend. As it came down, Glaisher regained first his consciousness, then his hearing, then his sight, and finally recovered altogether. It was found, by the instruments, that the balloon had reached a height of thirty thousand feet. The cause of these dangerous symptoms is, of course, lack of oxygen. There must be a constant flow of oxygen through the blood to supply the active cells in the tissues. In anæmia, for instance, there is a definite oxygen hunger, and the patient attempts to make it up by more rapid breathing; he is trying to get more air into his lungs.

While all the tissues of the body feel this lack of oxygen, the nerve tissues are the most sensitive to it. And one form of mountain sickness shows this very plainly. In this type the person feels excited and buoyant; sometimes he feels as if he were being lifted into the air. There may be twitching of the lips and trembling of the limbs. In severe cases this condition may even go so far as to cause convulsions.

Of course, the importance of oxygen to the high-flying aviator cannot be exaggerated. The Medical Research Laboratory found that, out of a hundred carefuly selected persons, only sixty-one are physically and mentally capable of reaching an altitude of over twenty thousand feet with safety; twenty-five are not safe above fifteen thousand feet, and fourteen ought not to go above eight thousand feet. It would be impossible for a pilot without an extra oxygen supply to take an aeroplane to the extreme altitudes which have been reached. Schroeder, for instance, climbed to almost thirty thousand feet at Dayton last year.

Experiments made on Pike's Peak show that complex changes occur in the body when a person stays at a high elevation for a long period. This is becoming "acclimated." But these changes do not occur when an aviator, or anyone else, alternates between high and low altitudes. So one should be careful about taking the chances.

Fainting is often the result of the body's effort to make the adjustments necessary to compensate for lack of oxygen. That is the reason why an aviator would faint, when he is at a high altitude, if he did not give himself oxygen from the tank in his machine.

This fainting in the air occurs sometimes even at comparatively low altitudes. The effects of the diminished supply of oxygen, which exists even below five thousand feet, are generally not quickly apparent. But in some cases they are cumulative, and are seen in pilots who have begun to "go stale." In these cases, the man should not fly at all until he has entirely recovered. By the way, it is interesting to note that "athletic hearts" behave particularly badly under low oxygen supply.

Here is another test which you can try on yourself: See how long you can hold your breath; and observe your sensations while doing it. This test was used at first by the British on the theory that it would show a man's ability to endure oxygen hunger. But it was finally determined that the two had little, if any, relation to each other.

As a rule, however, a man should be able to hold his breath for at least forty seconds. Most of the men who qualified as good pilots did it for sixty seconds or more. If dizziness, blurred vision, and other symptoms occurred under forty seconds, the applicant was rejected by the British. Even if he had a good lung expansion, this inability to hold his breath disqualified him in the opinion of the Royal Flying Corps examiners.

A further test was to make the candidate stoop and touch the floor four times in succession and then see how long he could hold his breath. Good pilots held it for at least forty seconds, generally between fifty and sixty seconds. To hold it less than thirty seconds was unsatisfactory.

Try these various tests on yourself. Get the family together and see which one has the best motion-sensing apparatus concealed within otherwise commonplace ears. If you've been crowing over other folks because you are never dizzy, or sea-sick, perhaps the reason is that your ears haven't sense enough, *motion* sense enough, to tell you to be. We like to find out new and interesting facts about ourselves. Here is a chance to do it in a novel way.

Partners

A LAWN TENNIS STORY

By

SYDNEY HORLER

:: ILLUSTRATED ::
By
TREYER EVANS

I.

THE satin shoe spurned the floor. With the very poise of her body proclaiming indignation, Sheila Tempest turned to deliver her Parthian shot.

"I will allow no man to dictate to me—*no* man, please understand! I consider you have behaved abominably! You need not trouble to see me home."

From the ballroom came the intoxicating lilt of a famous waltz.

"It is our dance, I believe," said Martin Huish, politely casual. His tanned face wore a slight smile; he gave no sign of having heard the girl's impassioned words.

From over a white shoulder came the reply.

"I am sorry, but I must cancel our dance. I have promised this waltz to Mr. Wyndham."

The next moment she had left the conservatory, her head held high, and her shoes tapping defiantly on the polished floor.

Huish did not attempt to detain her. Although he had given no sign of it, he had been dealt a heavy blow. He scarcely knew in what way he had offended the girl, and her peremptory manner had prevented him from asking for an explanation.

He sat down in a secluded corner and lit a cigarette. Floating on the air came the strains of the dance music; he bit his lip as he thought of the beautiful figure of Sheila Tempest swaying in the arms of the man against whom he had warned her.

Hugh Wyndham had served with him in the 3rd Midshires during eighteen months of the worst part of the war. The man was brave, cool, and a good leader of his men. He was, moreover, good-looking, well-mannered, and a fine sportsman. If he had not heard stories—stories which Huish knew to be true—about the man's private life, he would not, perhaps, have given the warning to the girl. In any case, he told himself, it was not jealousy which had prompted him to do this. That she should lose her temper over the matter he considered absurd. That was why he had smiled.

Many charming women, daintily gowned, their beauty enhanced by the dream-like setting, looked with the interest which is in reality an invitation at the brooding figure of the man; but he did not return their glances. Before Huish was one picture, and one picture only—a girl's radiant face, flushed with the excitement of the dance which had just concluded, looking upwards at a man bending over her in treacherous homage.

The cigarette burned down to the end. His finger smarting, Huish flung the stub away and ground it beneath his heel with a savage zest. Five minutes later he had left the hothouse atmosphere of the ballroom, and was walking home. But even the gracious twilight of the wonderful summer night did not bring him peace.

Lawn tennis was taken seriously by the Wavertree Club. The committee were zealots, while the secretary's chief thought in life was the prowess of the club, which he ruled with the firm, if kindly, hand of a despot. While the social side of the great summer pastime was not neglected, it became generally known in Surrey that one joined the Wavertree Club to play tennis, and not to drink tea out of ridiculously small cups and eat fancy cakes, handed round by a sweetly-pretty little thing in piqué shirt and ornamental jumper. As a matter of fact, you had to play a fairly useful game before you were admitted to the select membership of the Wavertree Club; Huggins, the secretary, saw to that. The service of a prospective new member was as important to Huggins as the public school of the Foreign Office novitiate is to Whitehall.

During the War, Huggins, too old to be any-

thing more valiant than a Special Constable, had mourned over the deserted courts of his beloved club; he looked like a man who found no salt in life; who had been stricken with a fatal loss; but with the opening of the 1919 season he had become his old self once again. He had welcomed the old playing members vociferously, with outstretched hand and smiling face: beating the Hun was necessary, of course, but that the Wavertree Club should pick up most of the prizes that were going at the Surrey County Championship, due to be held in July, was—er, highly important!

Pinker would go a long way in the Men's Singles; Miss Deakin would not disgrace the club in the Ladies' Singles; while for the Mixed Doubles there were Sheila Tempest and Martin Huish. As he coupled the names Huggins smiled. If he had been termed a match-maker, he would have retorted angrily that he was a retired tea merchant, who was worked to death looking after a tennis club that did not appreciate his efforts—but still he smiled. He had known Sheila since she was a sticky mite of femininity who loved being cuddled, and he had taken to Huish, a new-comer to the district, from the first ball he had seen him serve. Huish, moreover, was a silent man; Huggins liked silent men, probably because he was such a gifted talker himself.

He greeted Huish, as the latter strolled on to the ground, with a knowing smile.

"We're looking to you—you and Miss Tempest—to pull off the Mixed Doubles, you know, Huish," he said.

A slight flush dyed the tanned face of the other.

"I am afraid someone else will have the honour of playing with Miss Tempest," was the reply.

"What! Why, I won't have it! I arranged that you should play together, and I won't allow anyone else to interfere. Surely you aren't going to back out, Huish?"

"No, I'm not backing out. But Miss Tempest evidently does not wish to play with me. Perhaps she does not consider my game strong enough."

"Rubbish!" snorted the irate secretary. "You're easily the best Doubles man we have. I said that the first time I saw you play. You have leadership; you know how to control a game—to take things in hand. But how do you know Miss Tempest won't play with you? Surely you are mistaken."

"There's no mistake. Miss Tempest sent me a letter." Huish smiled bitterly at the other's words. It was because he had "taken things in hand" that Sheila Tempest had lashed him with her anger.

Huggins flung up his hands in despair.

"I'll see her about it," he said, with a shrug of the shoulders which everyone in the Wavertree Club knew stood for determination with Huggins. "I'll put an end to this nonsense. The club must be considered before a girl's whims. I'll tell her that you are expecting her to play with you——"

"I can't allow you to say that, Mr. Huggins," cut in a quietly-determined voice. "If Miss Tempest does not wish to play with me in the tournament next week, that finishes it, so far as I am concerned. After all, there are plenty of other men——"

"G-r-r-r!" cried the overwrought Huggins, interrupting in his turn. "I tell you," he went on, explosively, "that if you and Sheila Tempest play together we stand a really good chance of bringing the Mixed Doubles back to Wavertree; if you don't——" Words failing him, he rounded off the sentence with an eloquent motion of the hands.

"Sorry! But I cannot give you permission to tell Miss Tempest that I want her to play. That is decisive."

"Oh, go to the devil!" replied Huggins, forgetting his usual urbane courtesy in the stress of the moment.

While the rest of the club gave itself up to speculation, the couple who were the cause of all the talk remained absent from the courts. Sheila, once having spoken her mind, told herself she could better retain her dignity by not meeting Huish; while the latter, with instinctive good breeding, resolved not to cause any distress to the girl he had grown to love with an intensity that shook him. Questions—questions embarrassingly difficult to answer, would be asked. Both of them would be placed in a very delicate position. He had only gone on the courts that evening to explain the position to Huggins; and he would not have gone then if he had not known that Sheila Tempest was in town.

The thought of the Surrey County Championship had gone clean out of Huish's head, swamped by a vastly bigger theme, when, on arriving home from the city two nights after his interview with Huggins, he found a telegram awaiting him:—

"Will you play with me Surrey Championship? If so enter names. Wire reply.—MOIRA."

Ten minutes later he was at the telephone, ringing up Huggins.

"You can enter my name for the tournament, if you like," he said, listlessly.

"Of course I like," cried an excited voice at the other end. "But who's your partner?"

"My cousin, Miss Dillingham. She is coming down from the North especially, apparently. There will be no difficulty, I suppose?"

"None at all. She plays a clinking good game; not so good as a certain someone else, but quite good all the same. By the way, that someone else is going to play with Hugh Wyndham. She told me so to-day. Eh? What's that?"

But the receiver at the other end had been banged into its hook with a plonk.

II.

IN this year of 1919 people seemed to be able to make holiday when they liked. Every tennis enthusiast in the South of England crowded to see the Surrey County Championships. Every available seat had been booked.

"'LOOK HERE, MAN,' HE WENT ON, LEANING FORWARD EXCITEDLY, 'I WANT YOU TO SINK WHATEVER FEELINGS YOU HAVE ABOUT THE MATTER AND STOP AND PLAY.'"

The weather, too, was kind for this festival of the greensward. The sun beamed welcomingly from a canopy of blue. The scene was one of joyous zest.

Martin Huish would have asked nothing more of life if Fate had not played him such a blackguardly trick. In the hotel corridor he had just passed Sheila Tempest, and the frigid inclination of the head which she had given him in return to his salutation made him flinch in spite of himself.

He was walking down the steps of the hotel on his way to the railway station when he heard his name called.

"A telegram for you, Mr. Huish," the page-boy said.

Huish opened the envelope disinterestedly.

"Awfully sorry. Developed measles.—MOIRA."

After sending a telegram of gently ironical condolence, he went upstairs to pack. His only excuse for being at the Championship was that he was going to play, and as an attack of measles had made that impossible (for it was too late to secure another partner, and he had not entered for the Men's Singles or Doubles competitions), he would leave. He would feel easier if he did; certainly he had no appetite for seeing Sheila Tempest playing with Hugh Wyndham.

The intention was laudable, and had been fully determined upon, but an outstretched arm stayed Huish while he was coming out of his bedroom, bag in hand. The arm belonged to Huggins, the secretary of the Wavertree Lawn Tennis Club—a Huggins who was so excited that he could scarcely speak coherently.

"Where're you going?" Huggins demanded, barring the way with his rotund body.

"Home; my partner has developed measles. It's too late——"

"It's *not* too late! I hoped the wire I saw you reading was from her, because——"

"Because what? What in the deuce are you getting at, Huggins?"

The secretary of the Wavertree Lawn Tennis Club took off his spectacles and wiped them.

"I want to have a serious talk with you," he said, and led the way into Huish's bedroom.

"Sit down!" said Huggins, motioning Huish to his own bed.

Bewildered at the strange attitude of the secretary, Huish sat down. Huggins, after wiping his forehead with his handkerchief, plunged into a fervent appeal.

"You haven't been a member of the club long, Huish," he started, "and perhaps you will consider what I am going to say as an impertinence. But I'll risk that, because I've set my mind on the Wavertree Club winning the Mixed Doubles. Look here, man," he went on, leaning

forward excitedly, "I want you to sink whatever feelings you have about the matter and stop and play!"

"But what's the use?" demanded the mystified Huish. "Miss Dillingham has got measles. She is over two hundred miles away, anyhow, and it's too late for me to get another partner. I'd do all I could for the club, of course——"

"Then you'll play with Sheila Tempest!" interjected Huggins.

Huish rose from the bed and faced the rotund secretary, whose eyes behind his spectacles were gleaming.

"Let me have this straight," he said. "What are you getting at? Miss Tempest a week ago absolutely refused to play with me in the Doubles. She was to play with Wyndham."

"I know—I know," agreed Huggins, vainly endeavouring to keep still, "but Wyndham has sprained his ankle so badly that he is absolutely unable to play. Now—keep still, man: you'll make me excited—either the Wavertree Club is represented by Sheila Tempest and you, or it is not represented at all. That is just the position—and now"—explosively—"are you going to stand by the club, and do me a personal favour, or aren't you? Are you going to keep to your promise?"

"My promise was," replied Huish, "that I would do all I could for the club. But that is a very different thing from forcing myself on a girl who has already shown me, in the most unmistakable fashion, that she does not want to play with me—or ever to speak to me again. I am afraid I shall have to disappoint you. Besides, you have not seen Miss Tempest yet, I take it?"

"There won't be any opposition in that quarter," returned the persistent Huggins. "If Sheila Tempest plays a trick like that on me, I'll never forgive her. Then it's all settled, thank goodness!" He beamed happily upon the scowling Huish.

"It's not settled at all," the latter retorted. "Since you're such a decent chap, Huggins, I'll play, but only on these conditions: first, that you understand it's merely because I don't want you to think I'm letting you down, and, secondly, that you'll make it quite clear to Miss Tempest that the only reason I intrude my objectionable presence upon her is because you expressly asked me to play for the sake of the club. I want you to use those exact words. If——"

But Huggins was gone, rushing down the corridor with heavy-footed abandon.

"Good afternoon, Miss Tempest."

The girl returned the inclination of the man's head with a curt nod.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Huish," she replied.

Huish handed her the balls.

"Will you please serve?" he said. "I will play forward and leave the base-line to you."

His voice, which he had tried to make even, sounded harsh and grating because of his nervousness. It had an unconscious masterful air; the words almost constituted a command.

Huish went immediately to take up his position at the net. He did not see his partner pale to the lips before her face was flooded with a crimson tide. He did not see the defiance which flashed from her eyes.

The man himself was seething with rage. He felt humiliated that the girl should continue to treat him in this offhand manner. His hand stiffened on his racket as the thought came to him that Huggins might have bungled; that the girl was under the impression that the reason he had consented to play was because he might have another opportunity of thrusting his company upon her.

Whang!

A white spot rose before him. He lunged at it viciously. He put so much venom into the stroke that he might have had a personal grudge against the ball. An outburst of cheering told him that the ball had landed inside the court, and that it had been unplayable.

The grimness did not leave his face throughout the game. A man who had seen every championship for thirty years said he had never seen such terrific hitting.

The Wavertree Club representatives won the first set at six–two, and the second six–one.

"Splendid!" cried a rapturous Huggins. "Splendid! You'll have to enter for Wimbledon! Why, what——?"

The jaw of the speaker dropped as he saw the victorious partners bow coldly to each other before walking away—in opposite directions.

Huggins felt he had been almost insulted.

Both playing wonderful tennis, Sheila Tempest and Martin Huish fought their way through to the final of the Mixed Doubles. They played four games in all to achieve this honour, and exchanged, perhaps, a dozen words. These consisted of a cold "Good afternoon" before a game, and a chilly "Thank you" after. Once, Huish, forgetting himself, murmured "Well played, indeed!" as the girl picked up an apparently hopeless ground shot; but the blank look on his partner's face chilled him as they crossed the court.

III.

SHEILA TEMPEST looked up at the sea of faces, all of which seemed to be staring at her, and felt herself tremble. The strain of the past few days had almost been too much for her. Her nerves had been keyed up to the breaking-point; the slightest thing, and she knew she would come dangerously near to making a fool of herself.

Resolutely she tried to keep herself in hand. She was on the brink of realizing one of her most cherished ambitions: she had long dreamed of such a day, and even now could scarcely realize that the dream had become a reality.

And she owed it all to a man whom she told herself she hated! A man who spoke to her as though he owned her, body and soul; who ordered her about; who actually had had the impertinence to tell her she mustn't talk to another man!

Yet she could not deny that it was this man—whom she could not look at without clenching

her hands—who had steered her to victory through the different rounds. His personality had dominated her; every stroke she had made had seemed to be dictated by her partner. Certainly she had never played before with such unerring skill. The truth was she had been inspired; and, if circumstances had been different—if, for instance, she had not attended the Smyth-Pigott's dance—she would freely have admitted as much.

She remembered what Huggins had said to her: "Huish will see you through; leave it to him. He's that kind of chap." It was true that Huish had seen her through—and yet she told herself she hated him! She even said the words aloud to convince herself afresh.

"I will take everything I can—we have to win."

The words sounded, as usual, harsh and grating to Sheila Tempest. They had the effect of a douche of cold water upon her. She realized that she had felt almost like relenting towards the man a moment before—and hated the thought!

But she was there to play, and not to think. She sensed the dramatic hush that precedes a big event. It was a Saturday, and the seats almost groaned beneath the crowds of tense-eyed spectators.

She felt she would never forget that scene—the high banks of watchers, the white figures of her opponents—both celebrated players—showing in vivid contrast against the startlingly green turf, bathed in that golden sunshine, and the outline of her partner waiting at the net—the man who had made her realize her dearest ambition whilst all the time she felt she detested him!

Then she lifted her racket, and the game had commenced. In her agitation she had served a fault. The second ball had no life in it; its only merit was that it crept over the net.

The return came whizzing back to her on the base-line. Mechanically—mechanically because she was still in the dream-state in which she had entered the court—she swung at the ball. It had a heavy "cut," and it whorled away from her like an elusive imp. An impressive "*Oh!*" came from the crowd.

The cry made her feel faint. She felt her nerve failing her—slipping away. Her brain was listless, and her right arm seemed a mere dead weight. After serving a couple of inexplicable double-faults, she had difficulty in keeping back tears. Even the man who had helped her so far with his brilliant play could not help her now in the most crucial game of all.

She was beating herself! Bitterly she realized the fact.

She saw the jaw of Huish was grim-set as he walked back after the first game, in which they had not scored a single point. The sight made her blanch. How the man would despise her if they lost the match, as they apparently had every chance of doing! He had said, "We must win!"

Perched on the stands, Huggins groaned audibly. The collapse of Sheila Tempest was unaccountable. Through his thick glasses he saw the self-satisfied smirk of the opposing pair.

The glance of the secretary of the Wavertree Club shifted to Huish, the man in whom he had banked his faith. Would he be strong enough to bolster up Sheila Tempest's extraordinary weakness and save the name of the club he represented, if not the game?

Huish's first stroke revived the rapidly-fading enthusiasm of the dense crowd. It was a scorching forehand drive with top-spin which streaked into the far corner of the court like lightning: an untakable shot.

The ringing cheers which greeted the stroke acted as a tonic upon Sheila Tempest, giving her back some of the nervous force which had ebbed away from her in so amazing a manner.

But she was still only a shadow of her true self; the watching *cognoscenti* did not recognize in this hesitant girl, who was shaping so amateurishly, the splendidly-confident player who, aided by a brilliant partner, had fought her way by sheer merit through to the final.

Sheila managed to return the first service she received, but there was no "bite" in the stroke, and the waiting man on the other side of the net seized on the gentle lob like a hawk.

Ping!

The ball shot off his racket with fierce velocity. So confident was the player that he had won the point that he walked backwards away from the net.

A terrific outburst of cheering made him turn round. As though mesmerized, he watched a tennis ball flash past him. Huish, tense and determined, had shot his racket out at the white speck, and with astonishing skill had turned seemingly irretrievable defeat into astounding victory!

In that second shot Huish sounded the keynote of his game. The man played with the uncanny accuracy of a machine—accuracy flecked with genius. The crowd rose at him time after time, but still he drove and volleyed as though none of the excitement had touched him: as though he were a man of ice, and not of flesh and blood.

He was playing the game of his life—but he was playing for the greatest thing in his life.

Fleet-footed and tireless, he covered the whole court. He "poached" unpardonably, but the discerning crowd knew that he "poached" because his partner was afflicted with "nerves," and they cheered him for it. It was one player against a pair, and the sympathies of the watchers were with him.

Huish drew all eyes to himself. He was the master-mind of the court, and the other three seemed mere puppets, simply obeying his will.

Sheila Tempest became almost a spectator in one of the most thrilling contests that even an important championship has ever seen. What shots she was forced to make she played mechanically. The fascination which her partner was unconsciously exerting over her made her forget at times she was playing.

As courts were changed, she realized with a

flash of revelation that, in the battle of wills which she had waged with Huish since the night of the Smyth-Pigott's dance, she had lost irretrievably. This man, if he would, could dominate her life even as he was dominating to such a remarkable extent the present game. She knew that she would leave her future in his hands just as she was leaving this tennis match. She felt instinctively, moreover, that she would be in safe keeping, even as with the same intuition she knew that Huish would win this match for her. And it would be through the masterfulness for which she had hated him that he would win!

It was her service again. Huish crossed to her. He had a smile on his face and there was something like a twinkle in his grey eyes. His attitude was so changed that he might have read her mind.

"They're weakening, partner," he laughed, lightly. "Keep them moving!"

Not a word of reproach! He spoke to her as though she had been a help instead of a hindrance to him; as though she had won dazzling points, instead of serving double faults and putting her returns into the net. He had spoken to her as a comrade—as a pal. It was as if her heart had flashed him a message.

"Right, partner!" she said, and there was a lilt in her words that made Huish look at her in puzzled wonder.

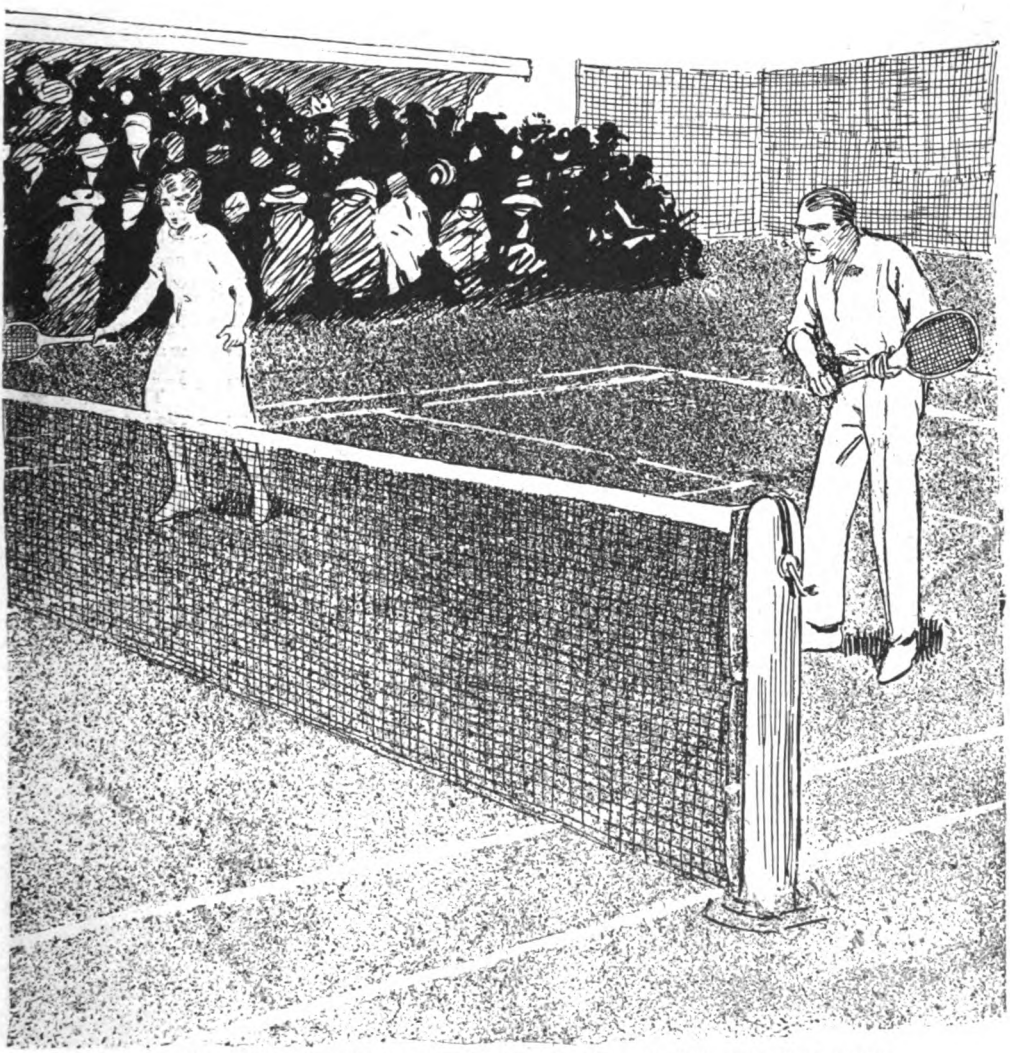
"FLEET-FOOTED AND TIRELESS, HUISH COVERED THE WHOLE COURT. HE 'POACHED' HIS PARTNER WAS AFFLICTED WITH

Something had snapped inside Sheila Tempest. The intolerable weight that she had been dragging about with her had departed magically. The joyousness of life flooded through her. Her face radiating happiness, she lifted her racket—and got in her first decent service of the match.

It became lawn-tennis history how, when the sets stood at one all, the representatives of the Wavertree Club put up such a display in the Mixed Doubles as made the spectators gasp with astonishment. Playing with irresistible verve, and in perfect understanding, one Sheila Tempest and her partner, one Martin Huish, literally played their opponents off their feet. Sporting writers for the newspapers said that the extraordinary brilliancy of Miss Sheila Tempest's play during the final stages of the match was almost as astonishing as the appalling ineffectiveness of her display during the first two sets. Even allowing for the adjectives, the phrase was very near the truth.

Huggins, in a state of intense perspiration and happiness, nearly shook the victors' hands off. Then he stopped, and, if he had been any other man but Huggins, he would have felt confused. For he was being ignored; what he was saying was not heard. Huish and the girl were looking at each other, oblivious of everyone else.

The secretary of the Wavertree Club waited a moment. Like most fat men, he was a victim



UNPARDONABLY, BUT THE DISCERNING CROWD KNEW THAT HE 'POACHED' BECAUSE 'NERVES,' AND THEY CHEERED HIM FOR IT."

of curiosity. At the present moment he was devoured by curiosity. He wanted to see if the winners of the Mixed Doubles would follow their usual practice and bow coldly to each other before walking away—in different directions.

He noticed with satisfaction that they strolled off in the direction of the hotel together, and flung what sounded like a challenge after the receding figures.

"Wait until the dance to-night!" he said.

From the ballroom came the strains of a famous waltz.

"Your partner will be looking for you," said Huish.

The girl averted her eyes. In them, she knew, was her secret plainly to be read.

"I have asked him to excuse me; I said I felt tired."

"It was very good of you," he replied, and, leaning forward, took her hand. The night air was full of fragrant wonders: he caught the scent of the roses she wore at her breast; a perfumed strand of her hair was against his face.

Eyes still averted, the girl spoke.

"You played wonderfully to-day. I want to thank you," she said. "Winning a championship meant so much to me. It has been one of my selfish ambitions ever since I took up the game. They all laughed at me at home; called me a pot-hunter. But it wasn't winning the cup which appealed to me, it was the fact of having *achieved* something. You see," she went on, "a girl feels so useless, no good at anything. And I'm afraid I'm not—I played abominably to-day! If it hadn't been for you——"

"*Please!*" protested Huish. "Whatever I did to-day, I was forced to do. You told me before—before the Smyth-Pigott's dance—that you wanted to win the Mixed Doubles. When you wrote and said you wouldn't play with me——"

"Please, don't," protested the girl in turn. "It was abominable of me, and I know it. Humbly I ask your pardon. You see"—lifting eyes that for brilliancy outshone the stars—"I have no pride left!"

"Sheila"—and the man's voice quavered as he said the word—"no pride can stand before love. I have realized that during the past week. I know now it was love that made me act as I did at the Smyth-Pigott's dance. No doubt I was brusque, crude, domineering—I have never been what is known as a 'ladies' man,' and the Army ruined what little gentility I may ever have had. But God knows, dear, I didn't want to hurt you!"

"THE SECRETARY NOTICED WITH SATISFACTION THAT THEY STROLLED OFF IN THE DIRECTION OF THE HOTEL TOGETHER."

The instinct that a woman has for her prospective mate made the girl draw near to him. She slipped into the outstretched arms like a tired but happy child.

"I like you just as you are," she said, her voice low but vibrant. "I thought I was strong enough to hold out against you, but I'm not—*and I'm glad!* Every woman loves a strong man, and you are strong enough to lead me anywhere—partner!"

The ROMANCE of SELF-MADE MEN

No. I.

LORD LEVERHULME.

By HAROLD BEGBIE.

BY your leave, I will begin by attempting to paint a portrait of our superman.

My purpose in so opening this narrative is that the reader may confidently put his feet up on an opposite chair, polish his spectacles with an easeful leisure, and assure himself that he is here invited to make no dull and painful inquiry into a question of economics, but rather, in company of a most genial and characteristic Englishman, smilingly and comfortably to decide on which side his daily bread is buttered.

AN EARLY PORTRAIT OF LORD LEVERHULME.
Photo. Walery.

Lord Leverhulme is about the size and build of Napoleon—a small, compact, high-shouldered, deep-chested, and corpulent man, but with the head upright and challenging, the light blue eye almost staring with expectation, the silvery white hair sticking up from the brow, as if to emphasize the note of inquiry in the eyes, the long mouth fidgeting in its eagerness to say a decisive word.

The colour of the clean-shaven face is of so definite an outdoor red that if you did not know the man was a hopeless water-drinker you might almost be tempted to suppose that his little finger went sometimes up to heaven while his soul descended, drop by drop, to a temperature which melts glass as easily as it parches the tongue or cracks the wicked heart. A small, thick-set, compact, and vigorous man, then, with a challenging head, white hair, a cheerful, deep red face, an inquiring blue eye, and a wide mouth that is for ever breaking into the most human smiles, while the teeth remain fast shut and the eyes observant.

You may take my assurance that within that broad and deep breast beats a real Lancashire heart—full of homeliness and rich with broad English humour, but masculine, strong, sensible, stubborn, ambitious, and unconquerable.

Pray observe particularly the stare of expectation, the eager anticipatory expression, in those light-coloured eyes. There is the index to the mind. Napoleon, with his head on his breast, his dark eyes lost in memory, his soul deep troubled by, and fast entangled in, the past, is the very antithesis of this Lancashire man. For Lord Leverhulme is always straining to see round the next corner, and not merely to reap a harvest before the other fellow gets there, but because he has long since exhausted the possibilities of his present corner, and also because round that next corner may be coming a jest which he desires to greet with instant laughter or an anecdote which he must immediately cap with a better. His spirit may be said to be always standing tiptoe ready for every Next.

A PRESENT-DAY PORTRAIT.
Photo. Melrington.

As for outward wrappings, he wears a square-topped deer-stalker hat as white as chalk, a grey check tie, and dark clothes, the coat of which is furnished with long tails. He is the most fastidious man in the world about body linen, and likes a new suit of under-things once a day. This is his own personal self-indulgence.

There are two things I should like to say of him before we go farther. I believe him to be one of the truest men that ever breathed English air—that is to say, a man rigorously and scrupulously honest, faithful to the last letter of his given word, and a staunch champion in the hour of his friend's adversity. In addition to this, I know him to be infinitely the most *creative* mind in industry, and the most active mind of all the notable men I have ever met in all parts of the world. His life is a passion—the passion of creation.

LORD LEVERHULME'S FATHER.

Let the reader keep in his mind these two assurances from one who knows the man very well. Lord Leverhulme is true English in every drop of his blood and every fibre of his being; he is also supreme in the creative power of his mind.

"Imagine yourself," said I, "in the witness-box."

"A most unpleasant situation," he interrupted. "I prefer Hampstead, or, if it comes to that, the Island of Lewis. Well I'm in the witness-box. What next?"

"I wish you to tell his lordship and the gentlemen of the jury," I replied, "where you get it from?"

"I don't understand you. I'm sorry, but I haven't the ghost of a notion what you're driving at. Which reminds me of a tale. There was once a Scotsman who——"

"I mean, from which of your parents do you derive your creative faculties?"

"Have I got any? You haven't established that yet. Why, what a fellow you are! You remind me of the woman who——"

"Tell me about your father."

"My father," he replied, "was very like that American organizer of whom you were speaking just now. He never praised anybody. I don't remember a single occasion on which my father gave me either one word of encouragement or even a glance of praise. His influence came from silence and watchfulness. He never said 'Well done'; certainly he never dreamed of saying 'Go ahead'—my goodness, no! But one knew that he was watching, and, because he was a good man, that knowledge was better than praise. I got more stimulus from my father, who said nothing, than from my mother, who praised too much."

"In neither of them can you see the germs of forcefulness?"

"Well, now, I've got to think about that. My mother was sweet and gentle—a beautiful, a very beautiful, character; but I shouldn't say she had it in her to set the Thames on fire. You know the origin of that phrase, of course. The Thames was——"

"And your father?"

"Now, my father might have had the wish and the energy to do big things; I can't say; I don't know; he never spoke about it. But, looking back, I can see that he felt it his bounden duty before anything else to provide for his children. That makes for conservatism. He had nine children, and seven were daughters. Those seven daughters seemed to tie his hands and fetter his feet. He daren't venture, because in venturing he was putting the happiness of those seven daughters to a risk. Who can tell? But for the duty he felt himself to owe to those seven daughters, he might have been a bold and successful venturer. As it was, he lived to be eighty-eight years old, and died in the knowledge that he had done his duty. He was a man profoundly religious, and no doubt the knowledge that he had left his daughters provided for must have made his end easy. Perhaps he reckoned that renown enough. You know the anecdote, of course, of the Irishman who——"

LORD LEVERHULME'S MOTHER.

Photo. Warwick Brookes.

"I CAME STRAIGHT FROM SCHOOL TO MY FATHER'S GROCERY BUSINESS."

"Lived to be eighty-eight!" I exclaimed. "Then he must have lived to see your success."

"Oh, yes; he was one of the first directors of Lever Brothers, and a familiar figure at Port Sunlight, welcomed by everybody, but silent and quiet, just watching the movement of those forces which he had never encouraged, and which he had certainly feared."

"But do you mean to say that you never got a word of praise from his lips for Port Sunlight?"

"Not a word!"

"The little grocer of Bolton lived to see the gigantic prosperity of his soap-manufacturing son at Port Sunlight, and never once said, 'Well, you're a credit to your father'?"

"Never once. It was through my mother I first learned that he took any deep interest in my ventures. She said to me one day, 'I think your father feels hurt because you have not asked him to put any money into your business.' He himself never told me that. My mother told me. That was in 1866, and referred to my grocery business. I was a wholesale grocer in those days. I started work at fifteen, coming straight from Bolton Church Institute School, which has given three High Sheriffs to Lancashire; and I never think of the headmaster, W. T. Mason, without gratitude. Yes, I came straight from school, where all the prizes I won were for mathematics, to my father's grocery business, and earned a shilling a week. At seventeen I was put into the office, still on the same wage. I soon discovered that things wanted brightening up in the counting-house. My father was in business before cheques were introduced, and couldn't be got to take to them for many years.

TAKING A ROAD WHICH "OPENED A DOOR TO A MOST AMAZING FUTURE."

"PUTTING HIS FATHER'S LEDGER RIGHT AND EARNING ONE SHILLING A WEEK."

I can see him now, cutting the bank-notes in half which I had fetched from the bank, he himself sending one half in an envelope of his directing, and I the other half in an envelope which I had directed—so that the writing shouldn't be recognized and the whole of the note lost. Oh, yes, he was mighty careful; he had seven daughters to think about. Well, you may imagine what the book-keeping was like; it certainly wasn't up-to-date! That was my opportunity, and I took it."

At seventeen years of age the young mathematician from the Bolton Church Institute was engaged in putting his father's ledger right in the office of the grocery store, earning one shilling a week. Being of a careful and optimistic nature, he became engaged to be married while

his salary was two pounds twelve shillings a year. But at twenty-one years of age he became a great fellow with a pound a week, out of which he had to buy his clothes, his shirts, his collars, his ties, his handkerchiefs, his underclothing, and his boots. Of this he never thought about complaining; but the counting-house had long grown too small for his ambition. He wanted to be on the road.

His father could not understand this restless desire, but eventually yielded, and at twenty-two William Lever was a partner in the growing business, earning eight hundred pounds a year, and travelling about Lancashire buying and selling in the interests of the firm.

One day, when he was twenty-five, and a married man of three years' experience, he found himself at a place called Hindley with his work finished and the hands of the clock at three. This was two hours quicker than usual. What should he do with those two hours? On one hand lay the road to his home in Bolton; on the other the road leading to the unvisited and undiscovered kingdom of Wigan. He decided to explore Wigan.

This decision opened a door to a most amazing future. The young venturer entered Wigan with his eyes wide open, took a fancy to the exterior of a wholesale grocery establishment, entered, discovered the business was for sale, made further inquiries, and eventually bought it. In 1874 he had made a small soap tablet, and now, as a wholesale grocer in 1885, he decided to extend this business. His capital, his own money, was four thousand pounds. He ventured it against firms with capitals amounting to millions.

Now began for him not only years of excessive hard thinking—he would never complain of that—but of excessive anxiety. His anxiety arose out of his success. He was making money, but the more he made the more he needed to extend and improve his plant. He could not stand still. To stand still would have been to have been crushed by the mastodons of the soap trade. But how was he to get money?

In the year 1891 he was making an income of fifty thousand pounds; and he was living in Palmyra Square, Warrington, paying thirty-five pounds a year for his house. Every farthing he could scrape together out of his huge income went back into the business. He hated to borrow money. He felt he could not justly ask his friends to invest in his hazardous undertaking—hazardous because of the power, jealousy, and wealth of the big firms. And so he went to his bankers, and they provided him with overdrafts, and these overdrafts preyed on his peace of mind, and worried him to such an extent that he almost thought of selling out and trying what he could do with the leisure of retirement.

Then came an offer from a company promoter. He was told that his business could be floated with a capital of six hundred thousand pounds. The sum staggered him. Was it just, was it right, to ask the public for six hundred thousand pounds, when at any moment his little business might be knocked on the head by the giants? This objection met the following answer, "What the devil does it matter to you what happens afterwards, so long as you get the money?"

That decided our Lancashire man. He would trust to himself. He would fight his own battle. Win or lose, his hands should be clean at the end of the struggle.

And so came fortune. Great was the reward, but not greater than the courage, self-reliance, and sterling honesty of the man deserved. In 1894 his anxieties were over. The firm, able to hold its own against the competition of the whole world, became a limited liability company; and at this day it has a capital of many millions.

"I can remember back," he says to me, "as far as my fifth year: even to my third year, for I remember how old Nick (Nicholas of Russia) was burnt in the streets of Bolton at the time of the Crimea—just as we are now burning the Kaiser. English people always like someone to burn when their tempers are up—Guy Fawkes, Napoleon, Nicholas, and the Kaiser—all symbols of something they don't like. My memory is quite clear about my childhood. I can recall now the earnestness of the home—four religious services on Sunday, and hard work all the week. But it was a most happy home, and I feel my father to have been a really great figure. I fitted in all right with most of his views. I never liked play. I preferred work. If I went into the country for a holiday I always wanted to do genuine work—haymaking and the rest. I couldn't be idle; and I had no fondness for games. I loved reading. I read Dickens and Thackeray with enormous pleasure—particularly Dickens. My father never complained of this taste of mine. He thought me venturesome, and reproved me when I branched off into soap,

"I REMEMBER THAT A FRIEND OF MY FATHER'S, A QUAKER, READ ME A LECTURE WHEN I STARTED AS A SOAP MANUFACTURER."

saying in a very judge-like tone of voice, 'The shoemaker should stick to his last'; but he never interfered with my character, and was not afraid because I happened to have lively spirits and laughed over Sam Weller and Mr. Winkle. By the way, I remember that a friend of his, a Quaker, read me a lecture when I started as a soap manufacturer. 'Well,' said he; 'your father would never have carried on in this way.' They were prudent men in those days. Prudence is a great virtue; but a man must have the courage of his faith and his will if he is to go ahead."

QUEEN ALEXANDRA AND PRINCESS VICTORIA AT A GARDEN PARTY AT LORD LEVERHULME'S HOUSE ON HAMPSTEAD HEATH.

Photo. Topical.

"And the same with nations?" I inquired.

Lord Leverhulme is not a politician, has no taste for the business of party politics, and his closest friends are to be found among the Labour Party, the Liberal Party, and the Conservative Party; but he is a tremendous lover of England, and a passionate Individualist, because he believes that England would come to grief if she abandoned the great Nelsonic attributes of initiative, self-reliance, and resourcefulness. He replied:—

"The same with nations. It is a pitiful thing to see good and well-meaning people led away by all this talk of nationalization. It is truly the most absurd gospel in the world. You may call it the gospel of suicide; or, if you want to be quite safe, the gospel of stagnation. I really cannot conceive how any man of sense and observation can support this idea for a single moment. Consider. Our problem is a simple one. It isn't the difficult problem of dividing up the wealth in the world so that everybody may have enough; it's the simpler problem of creating more wealth. It passes the wit of man to divide up insufficient wealth so that an ever-increasing population may have sufficient; but it ought not to pass the wit of man to bring much more wealth into existence so that all may be happy, healthy, and prosperous."

"That is the heart of the controversy—the wealth of the world is insufficient."

"To hear some people talk you might think that wealth is an inexhaustible cake, and that Capital has got this huge cake in its lap, and that Labour gets only the crumbs which fall to the floor! Wealth is to-morrow, and the day after to-morrow, and the day after that. It is something which isn't, and has got to be created. As soon as a man realizes this very simple but most important fact, he can state the economic problem in words that a child can understand. Which is the best way to create more wealth—by State organization, or by individual effort? It isn't an academic question. Look about you. Is there any State-managed industry in the world which is more efficient than individual businesses?

"I wonder some of the social dreamers," he continued, "aren't afraid. Just think what would be their fate if the working classes suddenly said to them, 'We like your theory: go ahead with it: put it into action.' Would they like that? Could they organize the industry of the country so that workmen earned higher wages than they do now and did less work? But that would be their task. That's what their promises amount to. They call the workman a wage-slave. It's a fine title! At present the workman in Bolton can throw up his job and go to Manchester or Oldham or London or Winnipeg or Sydney or New York. There's not much slavery in that. But under the State would he be free to leave one job for another? Could the munition worker do that during the war? These dreamers condemn militarism and conscription: but their whole system *is* militarism, and *is* conscription. You can't think of a Socialistic State without compulsion in every department of its existence. That's what Bolshevism is in Russia. It's the tyranny of the politician. Is there a worse tyranny? Suppose it was economically sound: suppose a Socialistic State could provide people with higher wages for less work—suppose that miracle, that impossibility; even so would not the moral loss of individual freedom ruin the whole scheme?"

He gives his opinion on these matters with all the authority of a practical man who has fought the competition of the world in his shirt-sleeves, and knows rather more of economics than the student of text-books. All the same, never mind how serious the matter of his debate may be, or how certain he may be of his own opinions, he speaks always with a playful smile, making use of homely words, and seeing his opponents in as genial a light as ever Mr. Pickwick saw Tracy Tupman or Augustus Snodgrass.

There is really a sort of grandeur in the man, if you look deep enough. He is the opposite of anything mean, pettifogging, cheeseparing, or narrow. The spaciousness of his commercial outlook has had a widening effect upon his mind. He can see life only on the grand scale, and likes to do things in the grand manner, his homely Lancashire common sense saving him from megalomania or the mere extravagance of vulgarity.

He bought Sutherland House, which Queen Victoria called a palace, and which certainly has one of the most beautiful and envious situations in London, and gave it to the nation, just as another man might give five pounds to a hospital. He has given Port Sunlight some of the most famous of modern pictures, and equipped it with a museum which would be the pride of many a great city. He has bought the island of Lewis with no thought of playing the king there, or of adding to his fortune, but with great joy in his heart because it provides him with difficult opportunities of exercising his creative faculties and improving the conditions of human life.

"I love making roads," he once said to me. "The road-maker is the best anonymous servant of humanity. He drives a great broad thoroughfare from town to town, and for generations men travel over the road, with all their hopes and fears, with all their cares and joys, never once asking who it was that made their way easier for them. A road-maker's life is full of a rich solitude and invisible rewards."

I should give a false impression of this vigorous spirit if I made no reference to his tenderness. Here one must write with exceeding care. But perhaps it may be said without trespassing too far on sacred ground that one of my clearest memories of the man is the memory of his exceeding tenderness towards the wife who had shared all the anxieties of his early years, and who had seen his ascent to dizzying fortune without the smallest misgiving as to its effect on his wholesome nature.

She was a minute little creature, smaller for a serious tendency to curvature of the spine, and with large eyes overflowing with sweetness and good nature, which looked at one always with the gentlest of smiles as she raised her bowed head sideways from her breast and spoke to one in a soft and winning tone. The attitude of Lord Leverhulme to this gentle little sweet-hearted woman, whose mind I am perfectly certain was never tinged by one bitter thought or one unworthy desire, although he carried himself towards her playfully and chaffingly, was always marked by a chivalrous courtesy and distinguished by a gesture of gratitude which I have never observed in his attitude towards other people. I have seen them — he loquacious and overflowing with energy, she silent, observant, and smiling—exchange glances from end to end of the table during a dinner-party which were full of biography. He has had no other companion in life so near to his deepest affections, and though he bears his loss bravely, her death remains the one supreme and unforgettable of all sorrows.

LORD LEVERHULME AT A GARDEN PARTY GIVEN BY HIM TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ACTORS' ASSOCIATION
Photo. Topical

He loves his great house on Hampstead Heath, which is crowded, perhaps too crowded, with beautiful china, furniture, and pictures, and where he practises a lavish hospitality towards all manner of people, from the highest to the humblest. It is a notable experience

to walk with this square-shouldered, vigorously upright, and boyish-hearted man through the great galleries of his London home, and to hear him laughingly discuss all the profound problems which lead lesser men to assume a portentous air and to practise a professorial vocabulary.

But though he laughs at the social dreamers, and although he sees Socialistic schemes as things little more substantial than moonshine, he himself is a great dreamer of a happier State—a State in which slums will be swept away, the hours of labour will be reduced, and the rewards of labour will be sensibly increased without increasing the cost of life.

I said to him the other day, "Nothing that has been accomplished by the State in the war tends to give you even a sneaking faith in nationalization?"

"No. Nothing. Nothing. On the contrary, I should say that the State management of affairs in war was the best object-lesson you could have of the fallacies of nationalization. Prodigious waste of money: protracted delays: top-heavy overhead charges: and just as many Labour troubles as under the old system."

"But you are not satisfied with the present position of Individualism?"

"Well, I can certainly see ways in which our whole policy might be changed for the better. In fact I can see no limit to the wealth of the British Empire if those changes were made. Take banking for example. At present we have an absurd system, which practically limits the credit of the British Empire to the output of gold in South Africa, Australia, and India. That is arbitrary and illogical. The measure of our credit is the measure of our possibilities. There are no possibilities in the world that equal the possibilities of the British Empire, and our credit could quite well be with absolute safety infinitely greater than the credit of any other nation. If we reformed our banking system in this manner, British trade would leap ahead. There's no doubt of that. But bankers are timid, timid as rabbits, and any go-ahead man in the United States can get credit where the safe man in England finds it impossible to raise a few thousand pounds.

"If it wasn't so costly," he says, "and if the consequences were not so irremediable, I should rather like to see an experiment in nationalization. Honestly, I can't conceive of any pantomime half so good as a Socialistic England. Imagine the great industries of this country in the hands of a committee in London who are there, the masters of the nation, mark you, for one reason, and for one reason only—because they are great talkers. That's true. It's a fact. The popular politician is the orator. You may have the brain of Newton, the heart of Nelson, and the energy and ambition of Napoleon, but if you can't shout down another fellow on a platform you'll never be given even an under-secretaryship. That's our curse in England. But let's get back to what I was saying. Can you imagine anything so grotesque and comic as the industries of this country, with all their thousand and one ramifications, handed over to the domination of Government officials, whose first virtue is platform glibness? Why, the whole idea is like a pantomime. But, of course, it's unthinkable. It wouldn't mean a political revolution, or even an industrial revolution; it would mean an entire transformation of British character. Everything we are, and everything we have accomplished in the world, may be traced to the vigorous independence and self-reliance of the British character. Before you could get nationalization, you would have to tear up the roots of British character. A few talkers may be taken by the idea; but no responsible man who understands what is at stake can contemplate a revolution so palpably, and so ridiculously, disastrous. You remember the story of the Scotsman who——"

Here I must interrupt again, for my space begins to press against me, and I would not leave the reader with the false idea in his mind that Lord Leverhulme adopts a negative attitude, however vigorous, towards all the theories of progressive minds.

He is an out-and-out reformer. He wants higher wages, fewer hours, better houses, and a more sensible system of education. He believes that we can pay our enormous debts much more easily than our ancestors paid their war debts, by using better machinery, and by realizing, each man and woman of us, that our spirit should be that of a rowing eight or a cricket eleven—all working together for victory.

No man I know is more eager to see wages higher, and few men I know are more enthusiastic for a system of profit-sharing.

But against any theory that cripples initiative or puts the creative mind under the control of officialdom, he maintains an uncompromising antagonism.

One who knows him well and has observed him with a shrewd eye writes to me as follows:—

"What are the secrets of this wonderful man's successes? First and foremost, his marvellous strength and vitality. He is never tired, he can travel all night and be quite fresh for business in the morning. He is never hurried and never flurried. No doubt his vitality and strength are natural gifts, but he has his own ideas about health. He has ideas about everything. The Duke of Wellington slept on a camp-bed in a room without a carpet; Lord Leverhulme sleeps in a small iron bedstead on a stone floor in the open air, winter and summer. His bed stands under an awning, and in snowy weather it is a curious sight to see him lying tucked up in his little oasis with the snow all round him. In London he is protected from intruders by an iron cage, and when he is going to bed looks rather like an old lion preparing for the night. He has the gift of sleep, which he says comes from having a clear conscience. He can sleep anywhere on the slightest provocation. He rises at six every morning and commences the day in his workroom, full of books of all sorts, technical treatises on soap-making, road-making, building, architecture, etc. By the way, he is a great admirer of *Country Life*. But he has other

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books of a more general character, and many of them, and what is more, he is a reader. He has books for use, not ornament. By twelve o'clock he has done a day's work, then he has his lunch—usually the same thing, something quite simple—macaroni-cheese, I think it is, and a glass of water. Then he has a sleep for half an hour, and then he is ready to begin the day again. His marvellous memory is another asset; he never forgets, except that he occasionally tells you one of his very numerous stories twice over, which is not surprising, considering that he seems to know thousands, and can always find something appropriate to almost any incident or occasion in life. His courage is another of his assets; he is never daunted by any enterprise or any opposition. If he thinks he is right he goes straight forward. Criticism does not weaken him nor deflect his aims. Like all men of his type, when he has once made up his mind he does not see too much of the other side. Then he is a great organizer, and, when he likes, the most tactful of men. When he does not like, he hits out straight from the shoulder, and if his opponent's nose happens to get in the way, so much the worse for him. He is a good speaker, lucid, humorous, and fatherly. Then he has a very rare quality for a man of business—he loves to produce beautiful things, and takes a real pleasure in fine buildings and old furniture. To be quite plain, I believe that he does not appreciate pictures in the same way that he appreciates other artistic objects. He has the constructional mind, and he admires things that are well-proportioned and well made. He has one of the finest collections of old furniture in

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SCENES IN PORT SUNLIGHT.

1.—THE FREE LIBRARY. 2.—CHRIST CHURCH. 3.—THE COTTAGE HOSPITAL. 4.—THE PARK ROAD CHILDREN'S SCHOOL. 5.—THE SQUARE, KNOWN AS THE DIAMOND.

Photos. Sport & General.

the country, and takes a real delight in it. How he finds the time to do all that he does no one exactly knows. Perhaps he does not know himself. He is always trotting off to see some piece of furniture which he thinks might suit him. Then he spends hours in preparing plans. He loves to design buildings. In his early life he was brought into close contact with an architect of fine perceptions, who still remains one of his dearest friends, and whose son is one of the directors of Lever Brothers. The result of this association has been the creation of Port Sunlight, with all its beautiful houses and well-designed factories, dining-rooms, rest-rooms, etc.

"It must never be forgotten that Lord Leverhulme was the pioneer in improving industrial conditions. He had the idea long before the Americans, or anyone else, erected the magnificent garden cities and modern factories which are now so common in different parts of the world. It is difficult to appreciate the magnitude and diversity of Lord Leverhulme's operations. He is the biggest soap-maker in the world. He and his companies own more acres of land than any other landowner. He is in the margarine business. Now he is tackling the fishing industry, which he intends to reorganize by improved methods of storage and refrigerating. He it was who first saw the value of tropical lands. He summed up the situation like this: He said, 'The world wants fat; animal fat will not suffice; we must get other sorts of fat, you must use oil. Now, where can you get oil in large quantities? You can get it from the coco-nut.' Then he started out and bought millions of acres of land in the tropics. When he found that the natives would not work because they earned enough money to satisfy their requirements, he put up cinemas in the coco-nut areas. The natives were so anxious to go to the cinemas that they went to work in order to earn money to pay for their tickets. The result was that the greater part of their wages returned to the source from which it came, through the medium of the cinemas.

"Now Lord Leverhulme is looking for another source of fat; he is going to dive into the sea and make use of the fishes."

This friendly observer adds the following note: "Lord Leverhulme," he says, "is very fond of Law. He takes a keen interest in the subject. He has fought some of the greatest law cases tried in this country for the last fifty years. He delights in helping to get up the cases. He finds this sort of thing an intellectual pleasure, and surprises the solicitors, counsel, and witnesses by turning up with fresh ideas at all sorts of ungodly hours. Perhaps when a witness is having his breakfast Lord Leverhulme drives up to the door and tells him that it has just occurred to him that the witness had made a wrong calculation, and that his figures ought to have been so and so. He has a curious combination of the business man, lawyer, artist, and architect. It is a splendid sight to see him at Port Sunlight, where he sits in a glass room with a thousand clerks on his right hand and a thousand on his left. The clerks sit in the body of the hall, which has galleries running along each side, these galleries being raised about two or three feet from the body of the hall; in the galleries are the managers' rooms. Lord Leverhulme dictates his correspondence and documents in a peculiar fashion. He dictates to three shorthand writers at the same time. They all take a note, and when he has gone they compare their notes and produce a joint transcript. When questioned as to the object of having three notes, Lord Leverhulme said: 'I get through a lot of work; I do not bother about the form. I say what I mean as quickly as I can. The three girls have to take the stuff down as best they can get it. They have more time than I have, and they can put together at their leisure what I have dictated to them. That is their business. Mine is to decide what is to be said.'

"He has a curious love of detail, and takes a keen interest in the conduct of his household affairs. Some time ago he was changing one of his housekeepers. He thought it desirable that her successor should improve her acquaintance with cooking. Consequently, he wrote at least a dozen letters in order to make arrangements for her to receive the necessary training. Nothing is too simple for him to attend to. If you go to see him, and if you are financially interested in any particular publication, you will find that this remarkable person will probably produce it and discuss it with you and tell you how much he spends in advertising in it, or why he does not advertise in it, and whether he intends to advertise in it. Then he produces every month a remarkable little paper called *Progress*, which contains detailed information as to the doings of his huge staff. This is edited by his brother-in-law, who was formerly identified with one of the leading London newspapers. It is a most interesting little paper, and usually contains one or two long speeches made by Lord Leverhulme to his staff, or at some public meeting.

"Of course a man who possesses all these qualities is a very dominating personality. A regular autocrat, but a benevolent, kindly autocrat. You must do as he says, but if you do as he says he will try to make it worth your while. If you do not do as he says, well—look out for squalls!"

A Woman is Only a Woman

By

P·G·WODEHOUSE

ILLUSTRATED BY

POPINI

ON a fine day in the spring, summer, or early autumn, there are few spots more delightful than the terrace in front of the Woodhaven Golf Club. It is a vantage-point peculiarly fitted to the man of philosophic mind: for from it may be seen that varied, never-ending pageant, which men call Golf, in a number of its aspects. To your right, on the first tee, stand the cheery optimists who are about to make their opening drive, happily conscious that even a topped shot will trickle a measurable distance down the steep hill. Away in the valley, directly in front of you, is the lake hole, where these same optimists will be converted to pessimism by the wet splash of a new ball. At your side is the ninth green, with its sinuous undulations which have so often wrecked the returning traveller in sight of home. And at various points within your line of vision are the third tee, the sixth tee, and the sinister bunkers about the eighth green—none of them lacking in food for the reflective mind.

It is on this terrace that the Oldest Member sits, watching the younger generation knocking at the divot. His eye is calm and dreamy—the eye of a man who, as the poet says, has seen Golf steadily and seen it whole. He sips absently from the glass on the table beside him. His gaze wanders from Jimmy Fothergill's two-hundred-and-twenty-yard drive down the hill to the silver drops that flash up in the sun, as young Freddie Woosley's mashie-shot drops weakly into the waters of the lake. Returning, it rests upon Peter Willard, large and tall, and James Todd, small and slender, as they struggle up the fairway of the ninth.

Love (says the Oldest Member) is an emotion which your true golfer should always treat with suspicion. Do not misunderstand me. I am not saying that love is a bad thing, only that it is an unknown quantity. I have known cases where marriage improved a man's game, and other cases where it seemed to put him right off his stroke. There seems to be no fixed rule. But what I do say is that a golfer should be cautious. He should not be led away by the first pretty face. I will tell you a story that illustrates the point. There have been, no doubt, a thousand others of exactly the same kind; but this one came under my immediate notice, and I can speak of it at first hand. It is the story of those two men who have just got on to the ninth green—Peter Willard and James Todd.

There is about great friendships between man and man (said the Oldest Member) a certain inevitability that can only be compared with the age-old association of ham and eggs. No one can say when it was that these two wholesome and palatable foodstuffs first came together, nor what was the mutual magnetism that brought their deathless partnership about. One simply feels that it is one of the things that must be so. Similarly with men. Who can trace to its first beginnings the love of Damon for Pythias, of David for Jonathan, of Swan for Edgar? Who can explain what it was about Crosse that first attracted Blackwell? We simply say, "These men are friends," and leave it at that.

In the case of Peter Willard and James Todd, one may hazard the guess that the first link in the chain that bound them together was the fact that they took up golf within a few days of each other, and contrived, as time went on, to develop such equal form at the game that the

most expert critics are still baffled in their efforts to decide which is the worse player. I have heard the point argued a hundred times without any conclusion being reached. Supporters of Peter claim that his driving off the tee entitles him to an unchallenged pre-eminence among the world's most hopeless foozlers—only to be discomfited later when the advocates of James show, by means of diagrams, that no one has ever surpassed their man in absolute incompetence with the spoon. It is one of those problems where debate is futile.

Few things draw two men together more surely than a mutual inability to master golf, coupled with an intense and ever-increasing love for the game. At the end of the first few months, when a series of costly experiments had convinced both Peter and James that there was not a tottering grey-beard or a toddling infant in the neighbourhood whose downfall they could encompass, the two became inseparable. It was pleasanter, they found, to play together, and go neck and neck round the eighteen holes, than to take on some lissom youngster who could spatter them all over the course with one old ball and a cut-down cleek stolen from his father: or some spavined elder who not only rubbed it into them, but was apt, between strokes, to bore them with personal reminiscences of the Crimean War. So they began to play together early and late. In the small hours before breakfast, long ere the first faint piping of the waking caddie made itself heard from the caddie-shed, they were half-way through their opening round. And, at close of day, when bats wheeled against the steely sky and the "pro's" had stolen home to rest, you might see them in the deepening dusk, going through the concluding exercises of their final spasm. After dark, they visited each other's houses and read golf books.

If you have gathered from what I have said that Peter Willard and James Todd were fond of golf, I am satisfied. That is the impression I intended to convey. They were real golfers, for real golf is a thing of the spirit, not of mere mechanical excellence of stroke.

It must not be thought, however, that they devoted too much of their time and their thoughts to golf—assuming, indeed, that such a thing is possible. Each was connected with a business in the metropolis; and often, before he left for the links, Peter would go to the trouble and expense of calling up the office to say he would not be coming in that day; while I myself have heard James—and this not once, but frequently—say, while lunching in the club-house, that he had half a mind to get Gracechurch Street on the 'phone and ask how things were going. They were, in fact, the type of men of whom England is proudest—the backbone of a great country, toilers in the mart, untired business-men, keen, red-blooded men of affairs. If they played a little golf besides, who shall blame them?

So they went on, day by day, happy and contented. And then the Woman came into their lives, like the Serpent in the Links of Eden, and perhaps for the first time they realized that they were not one entity—not one single, indivisible Something that made for topped drives and short putts—but two individuals, in whose breasts Nature had implanted other desires than the simple ambition some day to do the dog-leg hole on the second nine in under double figures. My friends tell me that, when I am relating a story, my language is inclined at times a little to obscure my meaning; but, if you understand from what I have been saying that James Todd and Peter Willard both fell in love with the same woman—all right, let us carry on. That is precisely what I was driving at.

I have not the pleasure of an intimate acquaintance with Grace Forrester. I have seen her in the distance, watering the flowers in her garden, and on these occasions her stance struck me as graceful. And once, at a picnic, I observed her killing wasps with a teaspoon, and was impressed by the freedom of the wrist-action of her back-swing. Beyond this, I can say little. But she must have been attractive, for there can be no doubt of the earnestness with which both Peter and James fell in love with her. I doubt if either slept a wink the night of the dance at which it was their privilege first to meet her.

The next afternoon, happening to encounter Peter in the bunker near the eleventh green, James said:—

"That was a nice girl, that Miss What's-her-name."

And Peter, pausing for a moment from his trench-digging, replied:—

"Yes."

And then James, with a pang, knew that he had a rival, for he had not mentioned Miss Forrester's name, and yet Peter had divined that it was to her that he had referred.

Love is a fever which, so to speak, drives off without wasting time on the address. On the very next morning after the conversation which I have related, James Todd rang Peter Willard up on the 'phone and cancelled their golf engagements for the day, on the plea of a sprained wrist. Peter, acknowledging the cancellation, stated that he himself had been on the point of ringing James up to say that he would be unable to play owing to a slight headache. They met at tea-time at Miss Forrester's house. James asked how Peter's headache was, and Peter said it was a little better. Peter inquired after James's sprained wrist, and was told it seemed on the mend. Miss Forrester dispensed tea and conversation to both impartially.

They walked home together. After an awkward silence of twenty minutes, James said:—

"There is something about the atmosphere—the aura, shall I say?—that emanates from a good woman that makes a man feel that life has a new, a different meaning."

Peter replied:—

"Yes."

When they reached James's door, James said:—

"I won't ask you in to-night, old man. You

want to go home and rest and cure that headache."

"Yes," said Peter.

There was another silence. Peter was thinking that, only a couple of days before, James had told him that he had a copy of Sandy MacBean's "How to Become a Scratch Man Your First Season by Studying Photographs" coming by parcel-post from town, and they had arranged to read it aloud together. By now, thought Peter, it must be lying on his friend's table. The thought saddened him. And James, guessing what was in Peter's mind, was saddened too. But he did not waver. He was in no mood to read MacBean's masterpiece that night. In the twenty minutes of silence after leaving Miss Forrester he had realized that "Grace" rhymes with "face," and he wanted to sit alone in his study and write poetry. The two men parted with a distant nod. I beg your pardon? Yes, you are right. Two distant nods. It was always a failing of mine to count the score erroneously.

It is not my purpose to weary you by a minute recital of the happenings of each day that went by. On the surface, the lives of these two men seemed unchanged. They still played golf together, and during the round achieved towards each other a manner that, superficially, retained all its ancient cheeriness and affection. If—I should say, when—James topped his drive, Peter never failed to say "Hard luck!" And when—or, rather, if—Peter managed not to top his, James invariably said "Great!" But things were not the same, and they knew it.

It so happened, as it sometimes will on these occasions, for Fate is a dramatist who gets his best effects with a small cast, that Peter Willard and James Todd were the only visible aspirants for the hand of Miss Forrester. Right at the beginning young Freddie Woosley had seemed attracted by the girl, and had called once or twice with flowers and chocolates, but Freddie's affections never centred themselves on one object for more than a few days, and he had dropped out after the first week. From that time on it became clear to the whole of Woodhaven that, if Grace Forrester intended to marry anyone in the place, it would be either James or Peter; and a good deal of interest was taken in the matter by the local sportsmen. So little was known of the form of the two men, neither having figured as principal in a love-affair before, that even money was the best you could get, and the market was sluggish. I think my own flutter of twelve golf-balls, taken up by Percival Brown, was the most substantial of any of the wagers. I selected James as the winner. Why, I can hardly say, unless that he had an aunt who contributed occasional stories to the *Woman's Sphere*. These things sometimes weigh with a girl. On the other hand, George Lucas, who had half-a-dozen of ginger-ale on Peter, based his calculations on the fact that James wore knickerbockers on the links, and that no girl could possibly love a man with calves like that. In short, you see, we really had nothing to go on.

Nor had James and Peter. The girl seemed to like them both equally. They never saw her except in each other's company. And it was not until one day it came out that Grace Forrester was knitting a sweater that there seemed a chance of getting a clue to her hidden feelings.

When the news began to spread through the place that Grace was knitting this sweater there was a big sensation. Had it happened during the war, there would, of course, have been nothing in it; for in those days all the Woodhaven girls were knitting sweaters for our brave troops, who notoriously fear nothing. But in peace-time the thing seemed to us practically to amount to a declaration.

"MISS FORRESTER DISPENSED TEA AND CONVERSATION TO BOTH IMPARTIALLY."

That was the view that James Todd and Peter Willard took of it, and they used to call on Grace, watch her knitting, and come away with their heads full of complicated calculations. The whole thing hung on one point—to wit, what size the sweater was going to be. If it was large, then it must be for Peter; if small, then James was the lucky man. Neither dared to make open inquiries, but it began to seem almost impossible to find out the truth without them. No masculine eye can reckon up purls and plains and estimate the size of chest which the garment is destined to cover. Moreover, with amateur knitters there must always be allowed a margin for involuntary error. There were many cases during the war where our girls sent sweaters to their sweethearts which would have induced strangulation in their young brothers. The amateur sweater of those days was, in fact, practically tantamount to German propaganda.

Peter and James were accordingly baffled. One evening the sweater would look small, and James would come away jubilant; the next it would have swollen over a vast area, and Peter would walk home singing. The suspense of the two men can readily be imagined. On the one hand, they wanted to know their fate; on the other, they fully realized that whoever the sweater was for would have to wear it. And, as it was vivid pink and would probably not fit by a mile, their hearts quailed at the prospect.

In all affairs of human tension there must come a breaking point. It came one night as the two men were walking home.

"Peter," said James, stopping in mid-stride. He mopped his forehead. His manner had been feverish all the evening.

"Yes?" said Peter.

"I can't stand this any longer. I haven't had a good night's rest for weeks. We must find out definitely which of us is to have that sweater."

"Let's go back and ask her," said Peter.

So they turned back and rang the bell and went into the house and presented themselves before Miss Forrester.

"Lovely evening," said James, to break the ice.

"Superb," said Peter.

"Delightful," said Miss Forrester, looking a little surprised at finding the troupe playing a return date without having booked it in advance.

"To settle a bet," said James, "will you please tell us who—I should say, whom—you are knitting that sweater for?"

"It is not a sweater," replied Miss Forrester, with a womanly candour that well became her. "It is a sock. And it is for my cousin Juliet's youngest son, Willie."

"Good night," said James.

"Good night," said Peter.

"Good night," said Grace Forrester.

It was during the long hours of the night, when ideas so often come to wakeful men, that James was struck by an admirable solution of his and Peter's difficulty. It seemed to him that, were one or the other to leave Woodhaven, the survivor would find himself in a position to conduct his wooing as wooing should be conducted. Hitherto, as I have indicated, neither had allowed the other to be more than a few minutes alone with the girl. They watched each other like hawks. When James called, Peter called. When Peter dropped in, James invariably popped round. The thing had resolved itself into a stalemate.

The idea which now came to James was that he and Peter should settle their rivalry by an eighteen-hole match on the links. He thought very highly of the idea before he finally went to sleep, and in the morning the scheme looked just as good to him as it had done overnight. And I am bound to say that I myself consider that it was a masterly solution. I am not one of those people who object to games of chance.

James was breakfasting next morning, preparatory to going round to disclose his plan to Peter, when Peter walked in, looking happier than he had done for days.

"'Morning," said James

"'Morning," said Peter.

Peter sat down and toyed absently with a slice of bacon.

"I've got an idea," he said.

"One isn't many," said James, bringing his knife down with a jerk-shot on a fried egg. "What is your idea?"

"Got it last night as I was lying awake. It struck me that, if either of us was to clear out of this place, the other would have a fair chance. You know what I mean—with Her. At present we've got each other stymied. Now, how would it be," said Peter, abstractedly spreading marmalade on his bacon, "if we were to play an eighteen-hole match, the loser to leg it out of the neighbourhood and stay away long enough to give the winner the chance to find out exactly how things stood?"

James started so violently that he struck himself in the left eye with his fork.

"That's exactly the idea I got last night, too."

"Then it's a go?"

"It's the only thing to do."

There was silence for a moment. Both men were thinking. Remember, they were friends. For years they had shared each other's sorrows, joys, and golf-balls, and sliced into the same bunkers.

Presently Peter said:—

"I shall miss you."

"What do you mean, miss me?"

"When you're gone. Woodhaven won't seem the same place. But of course you'll soon be able to come back. I sha'n't waste any time proposing."

"Leave me your address," said James, "and I'll send you a wire when you can return. You won't be offended if I don't ask you to be best man at the wedding? In the circumstances it might be painful to you."

Peter sighed dreamily.

"We'll have the sitting-room done in blue. Her eyes are blue."

"Remember," said James, "there will always be a knife and fork for you at our little nest. Grace is not the woman to want me to drop my bachelor friends."

"Touching this match," said Peter. "Strict Royal and Ancient rules, of course?"

"Certainly."

"I mean to say—no offence, old man—but no grounding niblicks in bunkers."

"Precisely. And, without hinting at anything personal, the ball shall be considered holed-out only when it is in the hole, not when it stops on the edge."

"Undoubtedly. And—you know I don't want to hurt your feelings—missing the ball counts as a stroke, not as a practice-swing."

"Exactly. And—you'll forgive me if I mention it—a player whose ball has fallen in the rough may not pull up all the bushes within a radius of three feet."

"In fact, strict rules."

"Strict rules."

They shook hands without more words, like two knights of King Arthur's Round Table making an appointment to joust at the next tournament. And presently Peter walked out, and James, with a guilty look over his shoulder, took down Sandy MacBean's great work from the bookshelf and began to study the photograph of the short approach-shot, showing Mr. MacBean swinging from Point A., through dotted line B–C, to Point D, his head the while remaining rigid at the spot marked with a cross. He felt a little guiltily that he had stolen a march on his friend, and that the contest was as good as over.

I cannot recall a lovelier summer day than that on which the great Todd-Willard eighteen-hole match took place. It had rained during the night, and now the sun shone down from a clear blue sky on to turf that glistened more greenly than the young grass of early spring. Butterflies flitted to and fro; birds sang merrily. In short, all Nature smiled. And it is to be doubted if Nature ever had a better excuse for smiling — or even laughing outright: for matches like that between James Todd and Peter Willard do not occur every day.

Whether it was that love had keyed them up, or whether hours of study of Braid's "Advanced Golf" and the Badminton Book had produced a belated effect, I cannot say; but both started off quite reasonably well. Our first hole, as you can see, is a bogey four, and James was dead on the pin in seven, leaving Peter, who had twice hit the United Kingdom with his mashie in mistake for the ball, a difficult putt for the half. Only one thing could happen when you left Peter a difficult putt; and James advanced to the lake hole one up, Peter, as he followed, trying to console himself with the thought that many of the best golfers prefer to lose the first hole and save themselves for a strong finish.

Peter and James had played over the lake hole so often that they had become accustomed to it, and had grown into the habit of sinking a ball or two as a preliminary formality with much the same stoicism displayed by those kings in ancient and superstitious times who used to fling jewellery into the sea to propitiate it before they took a voyage. But to-day, by one of those miracles without which golf would not be golf, each of them got over with his first shot—and not only over, but dead on the pin. Our "pro." himself could not have done better.

I think it was at this point that the two men began to go to pieces. They were in an excited frame of mind, and this thing unmanned them. You will no doubt recall Keats's poem about stout Cortes staring with eagle eyes at the Pacific while all his men gazed at each other with a wild surmise, silent upon a peak in Darien. Precisely so did Peter Willard and James Todd stare with eagle eyes at the second hole lake, and gaze at each other with a wild surmise, silent upon a tee in Woodhaven. They had dreamed of such a happening so often and woke to find the vision false, that at first they could not believe that the thing had actually occurred. They doubted their senses. To see themselves lying there "dead" made them wonder if they could be alive.

"I got over!" whispered James, in an awed voice.

"So did I!" muttered Peter.

"In one!"

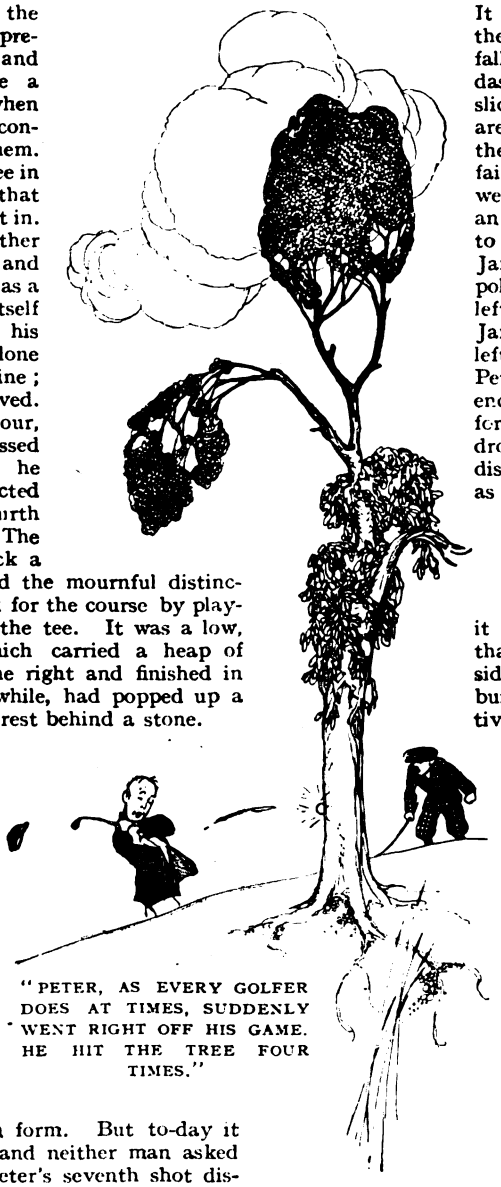
"With my very first!"

They walked in silence round the edge of the lake, and holed out. One putt was enough for

"JAMES AND PETER USED TO CALL ON GRACE AND WATCH HER KNITTING. THE WHOLE THING HUNG ON ONE POINT—TO WIT, WHAT SIZE THE SWEATER WAS GOING TO BE."

each, and they halved the hole with a two. Peter's previous record was eight, and James had once done a seven. There are times when strong men lose their self-control, and this was one of them. They reached the third tee in a daze, and it was here that mortification began to set in.

The third hole is another bogey four, up the hill and past the tree that serves as a direction-post, the hole itself being out of sight. On his day, James had often done it in ten and Peter in nine; but now they were unnerved. James who had the honour, shook visibly as he addressed his ball. Three times he swung and only connected with the ozone; the fourth time he topped badly. The discs had been set back a little way, and James had the mournful distinction of breaking a record for the course by playing his fifth shot from the tee. It was a low, raking brassey-shot, which carried a heap of stones twenty feet to the right and finished in a furrow. Peter, meanwhile, had popped up a lofty ball which came to rest behind a stone.



"PETER, AS EVERY GOLFER DOES AT TIMES, SUDDENLY WENT RIGHT OFF HIS GAME. HE HIT THE TREE FOUR TIMES."

It was now that the rigid rules governing this contest began to take their toll. Had they been playing an ordinary friendly round, each would have teed up on some convenient hillock and probably been past the tree with their second, for James would, in ordinary circumstances, have taken his drive back and regarded the strokes he had made as a little preliminary practice to get him into mid-season form. But to-day it was war to the niblick, and neither man asked or expected quarter. Peter's seventh shot dislodged the stone, leaving him a clear field, and James, with his eleventh, extricated himself from the furrow. Fifty feet from the tree James was eighteen, Peter twelve; but then the latter, as every golfer does at times, suddenly went right off his game. He hit the tree four times, then hooked into the sand-bunkers to the left of the hole. James, who had been playing a game that was steady without being brilliant, was on the green in twenty-six, Peter taking twenty-seven. Poor putting lost James the hole. Peter was down in thirty-three, but the pace was too hot for James. He missed a two-foot putt for the half, and they went to the fourth tee all square.

The fourth hole follows the curve of the road, on the other side of which are picturesque woods. It presents no difficulties to the expert, but it has pitfalls for the novice. The dashing player stands for a slice, while the more cautious are satisfied if they can clear the bunker that spans the fairway and lay their ball well out to the left, whence an iron shot will take them to the green. Peter and James combined the two policies. Peter aimed to the left and got a slice, and James, also aiming to the left, topped into the bunker. Peter, realizing from experience the futility of searching for his ball in the woods, drove a second, which also disappeared into the jungle, as did his third. By the time he had joined James in the bunker he had played his sixth.

It is the glorious uncertainty of golf that makes it the game it is. The fact that James and Peter, lying side by side in the same bunker, had played respectively one and six shots, might have induced an unthinking observer to fancy the chances of the former. And no doubt, had he not taken seven strokes to extricate himself from the pit, while his opponent, by some act of God, contrived to get out in two, James's chances might have been extremely rosy. As it was, the two men staggered out on to the fairway again with a score of eight apiece. Once past the bunker and round the bend of the road, the hole becomes simple. A judicious use of the cleek put Peter on the green in fourteen, while James, with a Braid iron, reached it in twelve. Peter was down in seventeen, and James contrived to halve. It was only as he was leaving the hole that the latter discovered that he had been putting with his niblick, which cannot have failed to exercise a prejudicial effect on his game. These little accidents are bound to happen when one is in a nervous and highly-strung condition.

The fifth and sixth holes produced no unusual features. Peter won the fifth in eleven, and James the sixth in ten. The short seventh they halved in nine. The eighth, always a tricky hole, they took no liberties with, James, sinking a long putt with his twenty-third, just

managing to halve. A ding-dong race up the hill for the ninth found James first at the pin, and they finished the first nine with James one up.

As they left the green James looked a little furtively at his companion.

"You might be strolling on to the tenth," he said. "I want to get a few balls at the shop. And my mashie wants fixing up. I sha'n't be long."

"I'll come with you," said Peter.

"Don't bother," said James. "You go on and hold our place at the tee."

I regret to say that James was lying. His mashie was in excellent repair, and he still had a dozen balls in his bag, it being his prudent practice always to start out with eighteen. No! What he had said was mere subterfuge. He wanted to go to his locker and snatch a few minutes with Sandy MacBean's "How to Become a Scratch Man." He felt sure that one more glance at the photograph of Mr. MacBean driving would give him the mastery of the stroke and so enable him to win the match. In this I think he was a little sanguine. The difficulty about Sandy MacBean's method of tuition was that he laid great stress on the fact that the ball should be directly in a line with a point exactly in the centre of the back of the player's neck; and so far James's efforts to keep his eye on the ball and on the back of his neck simultaneously had produced no satisfactory results.

It seemed to James, when he joined Peter on the tenth tee, that the latter's manner was strange. He was pale. There was a curious look in his eye.

"James, old man," he said.

"Yes?" said James.

"While you were away I have been thinking. James, old man, do you really love this girl?"

James stared. A spasm of pain twisted Peter's face.

"Suppose," he said, in a low voice, "she were not all you—we—think she is!"

"What do you mean?"

"Nothing, nothing."

"Miss Forrester is an angel."

"Yes, yes. Quite so."

"I know what it is," said James, passionately. "You're trying to put me off my stroke. You know that the least thing makes me lose my form."

"No, no!"

"You hope that you can take my mind off the game and make me go to pieces, and then you'll win the match."

"On the contrary," said Peter. "I intend to forfeit the match."

James reeled.

"What!"

"I give up."

"But—but——" James shook with emotion. His voice quavered. "Ah!" he cried. "I see now! I understand! You are doing this for me because I am your pal. Peter, this is noble! This is the sort of thing you read about in books. I've seen it in the movies. But I can't accept the sacrifice."

"You must!"

"No, no!"

"I insist!"

"Do you mean this?"

"I give her up, James, old man. I—I hope you will be happy."

"But I don't know what to say. How can I thank you?"

"Don't thank me."

"But, Peter, do you fully realize what you are doing? True, I am one up, but there are nine holes to go, and I am not right on my game to-day. You might easily beat me. Have you forgotten that I once took forty-seven at the dog-leg hole? This may be one of my bad days. Do you understand that if you insist on giving up I shall go to Miss Forrester to-night and propose to her?"

"I understand."

"And yet you stick to it that you are through?"

"I do. And, by the way, there's no need for you to wait till to-night. I saw Miss Forrester just now outside the tennis court. She's alone."

James turned crimson.

"Then I think perhaps——"

"You'd better go to her at once."

"'I INTEND TO FORFEIT THE MATCH,' SAID PETER. JAMES REELED. 'WHAT!' 'I GIVE UP.'"

"I will." James extended his hand. "Peter, old man, I shall never forget this."

"That's all right."

"What are you going to do?"

"Now, do you mean? Oh, I shall potter round the second nine. If you want me, you'll find me somewhere about."

"You'll come to the wedding, Peter?" said James, wistfully.

"Of course," said Peter. "Good luck."

He spoke cheerily, but, when the other had turned to go, he stood looking after him thoughtfully. Then he sighed a heavy sigh.

James approached Miss Forrester with a beating heart. She made a charming picture as she stood there in the sunlight, one hand on her hip, the other swaying a tennis racket.

"How do you do?" said James.

"How are you, Mr. Todd? Have you been playing golf?"

"Yes."

"With Mr. Willard?"

"Yes. We were having a match."

"Golf," said Grace Forrester, "seems to make men very rude. Mr. Willard left me without a word in the middle of our conversation."

James was astonished.

"Were you talking to Peter?"

"Yes. Just now. I can't understand what was the matter with him. He just turned on his heel and swung off."

"You oughtn't to turn on your heel when you swing," said James; "only on the ball of the foot."

"I beg your pardon?"

"Nothing, nothing. I wasn't thinking. The fact is, I've something on my mind. So has Peter. You mustn't think too hardly of him. We have been playing an important match, and it must have got on his nerves. You didn't happen by any chance to be watching us?"

"No."

"Ah! Then you didn't see me at the lake-hole. I wish you had seen me at the lake-hole. I did it in one under par."

"Was your father playing?"

"You don't understand. I mean I did it in one better than even the finest player is supposed to do it. It's a mashie-shot you know. You mustn't play it too light, or you fall in the lake; and you mustn't play it too hard, or you go past the hole into the woods. It requires the nicest delicacy and judgment, such as I gave it. You might have to wait a year before seeing anyone do it in two again. I doubt if the "pro." often does it in two. Now, directly we came to this hole to-day, I made up my mind that there was going to be no mistake. The great secret of any shot at golf is ease, elegance, and the ability to relax. The majority of men, you will find, think it important that their address should be good."

"How snobbish! What does it matter where a man lives?"

"You don't absolutely follow me. I refer to the waggle and the stance before you make the stroke. Most players seem to fix in their minds the appearance of the angles which are presented by the position of the arms, legs, and club shaft, and it is largely the desire to retain these angles which results in their moving their heads and stiffening their muscles so that there is no freedom in the swing. There is only one point which vitally affects the stroke, and the only reason why that should be kept constant is that you are enabled to see your ball clearly. That is the pivotal point marked at the base of the neck, and a line drawn from this point to the ball should be at right angles to the line of flight."

"'GOLF,' SHE SAID, 'BORES ME PALLID. I THINK IT IS THE SILLIEST GAME EVER INVENTED.'"

James paused for a moment for air, and as he paused Miss Forrester spoke.

"This is all gibberish to me," she said.

"Gibberish!" gasped James. "I am quoting verbatim from one of the best authorities on golf."

Miss Forrester swung her tennis racket irritably.

"Golf," she said, "bores me pallid. I think it is the silliest game ever invented!"

The trouble about telling a story is that words are so feeble a means of depicting the supreme moments of life. That is where the artist has the advantage over the historian. Were I an artist, I should show James at this point falling over backwards with his feet together and his eyes shut, with a semicircular dotted line marking the progress of his flight and a few stars above his head to indicate moral collapse. There are no words that can adequately describe the sheer, black horror that froze the blood in his veins as this frightful speech smote his ears.

He had never inquired into Miss Forrester's religious views before, but he had always assumed that they were sound. And now here she was polluting the golden summer air with the most hideous blasphemy. It would be incorrect to say that James's love was turned to hate. He did not hate Grace. The repulsion he felt was deeper than mere hate. What he felt was not altogether loathing, and not wholly pity. It was a blend of the two.

There was a tense silence. The listening world stood still. Then, without a word, James Todd turned on his heel and tottered away.

Peter was working moodily in the twelfth bunker when his friend arrived. He looked up with a start. Then, seeing that the other was alone, he came forward hesitatingly.

"Am I to congratulate you?"

James breathed a deep breath.

"You are!" he said. "On an escape!"

"She refused you?"

"She didn't get the chance! Old man, have you ever sent one right up the edge of that bunker in front of the seventh and just not gone in?"

"Very rarely."

"I did once. It was my second shot, from a good lie, with the light iron, and I followed well through and thought I had gone just too far, and, when I walked up, there was my ball on the edge of the bunker, nicely teed up on a chunk of grass, so that I was able to lay it dead with my mashie-niblick, holing out in six. Well, what I mean to say is, I feel now as I felt then—as if some unseen power had withheld me in time from some frightful disaster."

"I know just how you feel," said Peter, gravely.

"Peter, old man, that girl said golf bored her pallid. She said she thought it was the silliest game ever invented." He paused to mark the effect of his words. Peter merely smiled a faint, wan smile. "You don't seem revolted," said James.

"I am revolted, but not surprised. You see, she said the same thing to me only a few minutes before."

"She did!"

"It amounted to the same thing. I had just been telling her how I did the lake-hole to-day in two, and she said that in her opinion golf was a game for children with water on the brain who weren't athletic enough to play Animal Grab."

The two men shivered in sympathy.

"There must be insanity in the family," said James at last.

"That," said Peter, "is the charitable explanation."

"We were fortunate to find it out in time."

"We were!"

"We mustn't run a risk like that again."

"Never again!"

"I think we had better take up golf really seriously. It will keep us out of mischief."

"You're quite right. We ought to do our four rounds a day regularly."

"In spring, summer, and autumn. And in winter it would be rash not to practise most of the day at one of those indoor schools."

"We ought to be safe that way."

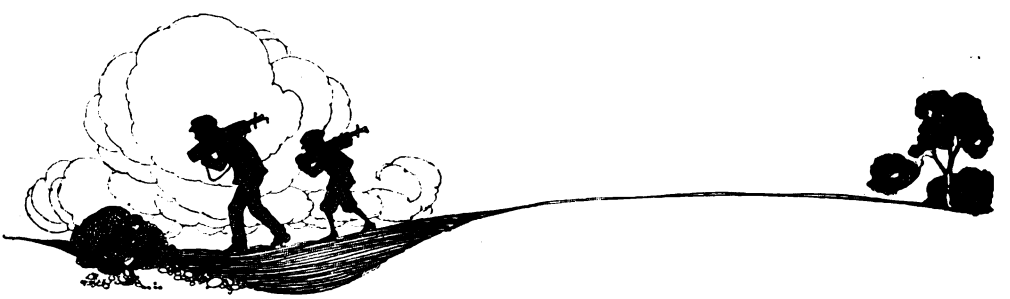
"Peter, old man," said James, "I've been meaning to speak to you about it for some time. I've got Sandy MacBean's new book, and I think you ought to read it. It is full of helpful hints."

"James!"

"Peter!"

Silently the two men clasped hands. James Todd and Peter Willard were themselves again.

And so (said the Oldest Member) we come back to our original starting-point—to wit, that, while there is nothing to be said definitely against love, your golfer should be extremely careful how he indulges in it. It may improve his game or it may not. But, if he finds that there is any danger that it may not—if the object of his affections is not the kind of girl who will listen to him with cheerful sympathy through the long evenings, while he tells her, illustrating stance, and grip, and swing, with the kitchen poker, each detail of the day's round—then, I say unhesitatingly, he had better leave it alone. Love has had a lot of press-agenting from the oldest times; but there are higher, nobler things than love. A woman is only a woman, but a hefty drive is a slosh.



THE SYCAMORE JUMPER.

A NATURAL HISTORY PUZZLE SOLVED FOR THE FIRST TIME.

By JOHN J. WARD, F.E.S.

Illustrated with original photographs by the Author.

AMONGST the fallen sycamore leaves that line the base of the hedgerow in the lane there is resting a tiny and wonderful creature whose life story provides a most absorbing chapter in natural history.

Surely Nature must have been in a particularly ingenious mood when the Sycamore Jumper—for such is the name of the creature—received its instructions in the ways of life. Let us go back to a day early in July when this little natural wonder started on its extraordinary path of development.

Where the tiny fly came from need not trouble us for the moment, but there it was balancing itself on the edge of one of the five points of a sycamore leaf; just a small fly, much less than a house-fly in size, with a black body bearing some traces of yellow, and a dark triangular spot on each transparent forewing.

It examined the edge of the leaf very critically, and then, gripping it firmly with its legs, it brought the end of its body in contact with it, and by means of a pair of minute saws at its tail-end it punctured the leaf-tissues and placed one egg deeply into the opening it had cut. Then it travelled across the leaf to the point of an opposite lobe and treated that likewise. That was apparently sufficient attention for that leaf (although sometimes three eggs are placed on the same leaf), for away it flew into the sunlight.

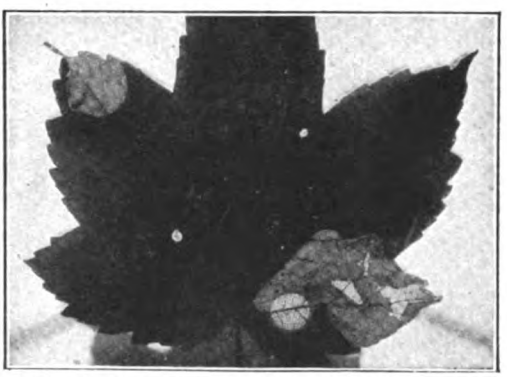


FIG 1. A SYCAMORE LEAF WITH THE JUMPER GRUB IN AN EARLY STAGE IN THE TOP LEFT CORNER, AND THE WORK OF ANOTHER IN THE RIGHT LOWER CORNER AFTER IT HAS LEFT THE LEAF.

FIG. 2. TWO GRUBS WELL ADVANCED WITH THEIR WORK, THE LOWERMOST BEING ALMOST READY TO MAKE ITS DISC.

Now from each of those eggs there hatched a queer little grub whose instinctive instructions were on no account to expose itself to the open air. Indeed, on that same sycamore leaf there would roam fierce biting animals, much larger than the little grub itself, and against which it would stand no possible chance of escape, if once discovered. It is true that perhaps the most formidable of these foes would be nothing larger than ants, but, even so, their strong jaws would be as dangerous to this little grub as those of a lion or tiger would be to a man. There might also be an occasional night-prowling earwig, and a host of crawling and crocodile-like creatures in the form of larvæ of lacewing-fly, hover-fly, and lady-bird-beetles, all of which really come in search of aphides, or "blight," on which they feed, but a young and juicy grub is not infrequently a welcome change on their menu. But the dangers of the sycamore leaf surface do not end there. There are also tiny "bombing planes" that swoop down from the air and place a "bomb" in the form of an egg on, or in, the body of the defenceless grub, the egg hatching into a still smaller larva which becomes an internal parasite, destroying the grub and eventually breaking through its skin and becoming a parasitic fly with all the equipment to start "bombing" other grubs that expose themselves on a sycamore leaf.

There are, furthermore, small spiders on sycamore leaves that relish a tender grub if one happens to crawl under their net spread almost

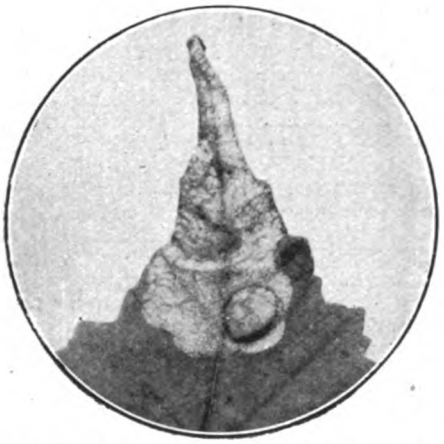


FIG. 3. WHAT HAPPENED ON THE SURFACE OF THE LEAF. A DISC-LIKE PORTION BEGINS TO DETACH ITSELF AND, WHILE YOU WATCH IT, IT SUDDENLY—

flat on the undersides of the leaves. In fact, the dangers on the leaf surface are far too numerous to mention; to live there would be like living in a tropical forest surrounded by wild and dangerous animals without any means of defence.

Nevertheless, the defenceless Sycamore Jumper grub requires sycamore leaf to nourish it, and Nature, in the course of its development, has taught it how to compete in the struggle of life against this formidable array of foes, and, as I have already pointed out, the mother fly gives her offspring a good start in life by placing the egg from which it is to emerge between the upper and lower surface skins of the leaf, well in amongst the juicy green tissues.

So soon as the little grub emerges from the egg it proceeds to mine its way systematically through the green substance of the leaf, by eating it as it goes, but never breaking through the upper or lower surface skins. When it has been feeding for a few days the area in which it is working becomes bleached, owing to the green tissue being removed from between the colourless covering skins. In the top left-hand corner of Fig. 1 the grub is seen at an early stage when feeding, while in Fig. 2 are examples showing further development, the lowermost grub being nearly full-fed.

At the end of nine or ten days the grub has finished feeding, and then it is brought up against a difficult problem. It has to get to the ground for the next stage of its development, and its instinctive instructions, we should remember, were *on no account to expose itself to the open air*. Now, to leave a leaf well up the tree and travel to the ground without so doing seems like an impossibility. Nevertheless, the little grub proceeds to undertake the apparently impossible task.

If you happen to be standing by a sycamore tree during a sunny day in July, you may see the "impossible" performed. In Fig. 3 is seen the bleached lobe of a leaf where the grub has been feeding, and it will be noticed that a disc-like portion of the surface appears to be breaking away. You might scarcely have noticed it at all but for the fact of the disc-like part giving a sudden jerk; indeed, it may throw itself completely open, as shown in Fig. 4. Perhaps another sharp jerk will entirely detach it (Fig. 5), and away it slides off the leaf, tumbling from leaf to leaf until it reaches the ground. Even then it does not immediately come to rest, for, as the sun shines on it, we see it jerking about in a most lively fashion. At last, however, it reaches a spot where its activities cease.

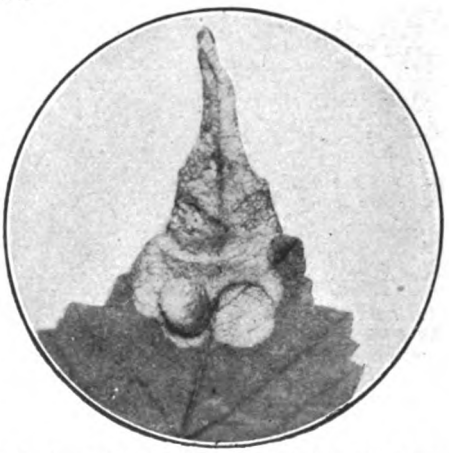


FIG. 4. —JERKS OPEN LIKE A LITTLE TRAP-DOOR, AND—

Now it only requires a moment's thought to realize that some very wonderful things have happened. If we look at Fig. 5 we see a distinct circular portion has been removed from the surface of the leaf, but that there is no direct hole through the leaf, the lower skin being left intact. Then we pick up the little disc and examine it carefully. The upper side is, undoubtedly, the removed portion of the outer surface skin of the leaf, but the lower side is seen to be semi-transparent,

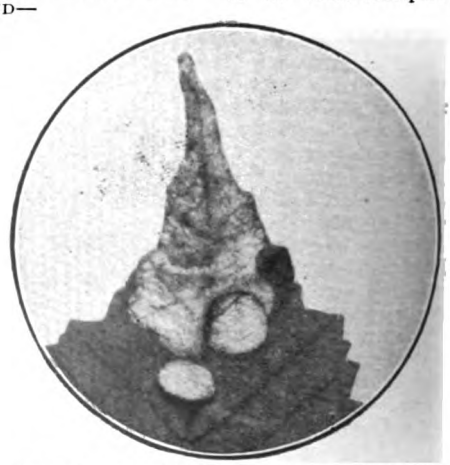


FIG. 5. —A MOMENT LATER IT GIVES ANOTHER SHARP JERK AND IS FREE.
Note: Figs. 1, 3, 4, and 5 are natural size.

and composed of a gelatine-like material through which a pale yellow grub can be seen —the Sycamore Jumper, enclosed in a first-class "Pullman car" of its own design for winter travel and comfort.

We will now endeavour to see how these astonishing events came about. In Fig. 6 is shown an area in which the grub has been feeding, photographed at twice natural size, and the grub is seen just commencing to cut its disc. It is photographed against the light, *i.e.*, with light projected through the leaf. It will be noticed that at the tip of the leaf the two surface skins are somewhat torn apart, which sometimes happens during windy weather, when the dry end of the leaf gets broken, but in such cases the grub is then well away from the exposed part, as seen in Fig. 6.

The grub, it will be observed, is just commencing to strike the circle for the disc it is about to cut. The diameter of the circle is approximately the length of its body, and at the broad end of its body are its "scissors," or biting mandibles. With its biting mouth-parts it cuts a minute slit in the upper surface skin of the leaf, then misses a portion of about the same size, and bites again. In this way it makes a perforated circle, but since it moves its whole body completely round, just how it retains its centre is somewhat difficult to understand. Nevertheless, the circle is a moderately true one when first cut, although it loses some of its roundness in the process of drying.

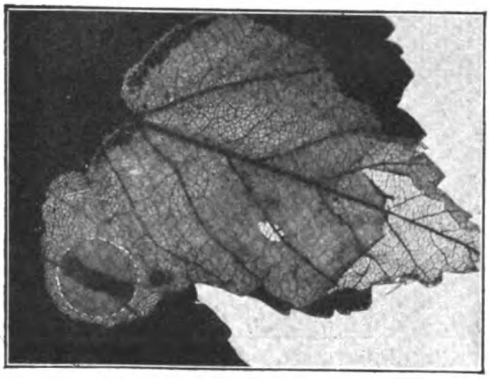


FIG. 7. THE PORTION OF LEAF SHOWN IN FIG. 6 PHOTOGRAPHED AN HOUR LATER. NOTE HOW NEATLY THE CIRCLE HAS BEEN PERFORATED BY THE BITING JAWS OF THE GRUB.

In Fig. 7 the circle is seen to have been cut, but the alternating attached parts have not yet broken away. At this stage the grub spends several hours in dealing with the underside of the disc. The disc in Fig. 7 is seen to be denser than that in Fig. 6, the difference being due to the fact that the grub has added a lower floor to it. This floor beneath it is a sheet of thin, but strong, gelatine-like material of a slightly brown colour, and it is neatly fitted to the cut portion of the leaf-skin above, being attached at its edges and carefully lined at the inside margin with silk, both the gelatinous substance and the silk being secreted by the grub from special glands.

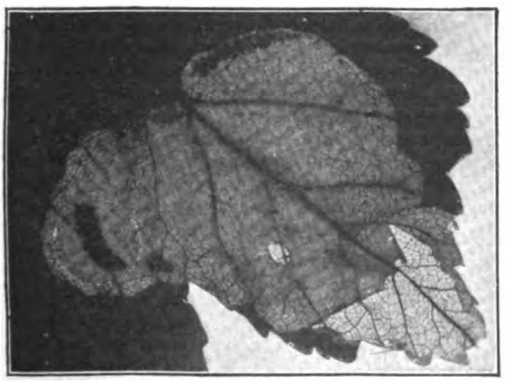


FIG. 6. THE EATEN PORTION OF THE LEAF PHOTOGRAPHED AGAINST THE LIGHT TO SHOW THE GRUB WITHIN. IT IS SEEN JUST STRIKING ITS CIRCLE TO CUT ITSELF FREE.

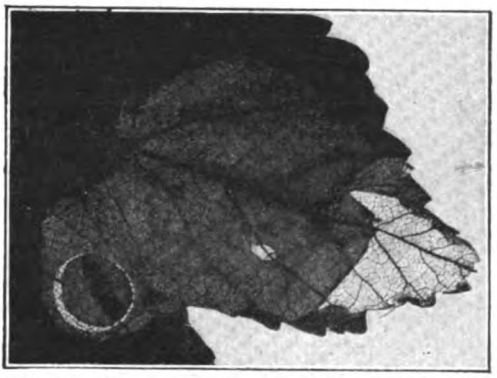


FIG. 8. THE LEAF THEN SLOWLY DRIES, AND THE JERKING MOVEMENTS OF THE GRUB WITHIN BEGIN TO DETACH THE DISC AROUND ITS EDGES.

Then, as the air creeps under the perforations, the disc begins to dry and break away around its edges, shrinking somewhat during that process—as shown in Fig. 8, which is the corresponding stage to that shown at natural size in Fig. 3. The disc in that way slowly dries from its edges inwards, the lower gelatine-like floor retaining a hold at its central part until almost the last moment. There is, however, a tendency for a portion of the perforation to adhere at one edge, which sometimes acts as a kind of hinge, as seen in Fig. 4. There is, apparently, no reason why one portion of the edge should hold any firmer than the other, but it may mark the spot where the grub commenced, or finished, cutting its circle. At the same time, even that insignificant detail may be quite in the scheme of things, and have a function behind it, as we shall presently see.

The disc, dry, and almost ready to break away, is reached by the afternoon sunlight, but still holds on at its central part and at one spot on its edge. Then the warmth of the sun's rays

awakens to activity the resting grub, and, taking hold of the inner silk-lined edge of the disc in its jaws, it holds firmly on and kicks out vigorously from side to side with its tail-end, distinctly pausing between each kick from right to left, or left to right, as the case may be. The kick is so forcibly made that it can be heard quite plainly as the tail-end strikes the inside of the disc. Consequently, the disc is seen to jerk up and down in a curious manner until an extra strong thrust suddenly detaches it. Should it fall on the upper surface of the leaf the grub rapidly kicks out until it reaches the edge of the leaf and the disc falls to the ground.

It should be observed that the disc does not merely dry and slip off, but at the last requires powerful efforts by the grub itself to release it, and that these efforts are prompted by the warmth and bright light of the sun's rays—for which the grub has a great antipathy. Yes, the Sycamore Jumper grub has enemies to contend with even at this psychological moment of its history, and its aversion to sunlight and that hinge-like portion of its disc that does not readily break away provide, I think, its means of escape from those enemies.

Let us suppose that the disc slowly dried off and rested on the large horizontal leaf of the sycamore tree. On a still day it might remain there for an hour or more, a pale brownish disc on a dark green leaf, something which, in the bright sunlight, would be likely to attract the eye of any hungry bird seeking a meal. Still greater would that danger become if the grub in its disc occupied much time in travelling across the broad surface of the leaf, for movement near a bird would be fatal. So it occurs that speed in detaching its disc and getting to the ground becomes essential. The adhering portion of the disc, together with the irritating sunlight, therefore urges the grub to struggle violently to escape, and its efforts are usually so successful that its vigorous jerkings hurl it clear of the leaf often at the very moment of its detachment; consequently, it takes little or no surface risks.

In Fig. 9 we see it a moment before it falls to the ground. The grub cannot be seen in the disc in that photograph as it is shown in Figs. 6, 7, and 8, as it was photographed as seen by the human eye, when the outer skin becomes opaque, the former figures, as previously mentioned, being photographed with light passing through the leaf, thus giving it transparency.

When the disc reaches the ground it continues to travel so long as it is stimulated by sunlight or warm ground, but so soon as it reaches a cool, shaded spot it comes to rest, and, if unmolested, lies amongst the fallen leaves, protected from the eyes of its enemies, throughout the remainder of the summer, and the autumn, winter, and spring, until early the following summer, when the small and inconspicuous sawfly, which has by that time matured in the disc, crawls from amongst the leaves to make its flight and seek a mate, and in its turn to visit the sycamore leaves to deposit its eggs.

It now only remains for me to offer an original theory in explanation of the astonishing locomotion of this grub while enclosed in its disc, which has hitherto proved a puzzle to entomologists. Seeing that the grub has to move with it the floor on which it rests, and is completely enclosed in the disc, its locomotion becomes difficult to understand. If, however, we examine with the microscope the gelatine-like layer of the under side of its disc, we find that it is quite a complex piece of work, and not merely the semi-transparent cover that it appears to be. It is lined on its inner side with numerous silken threads stretched like a network all over it (Fig. 9).

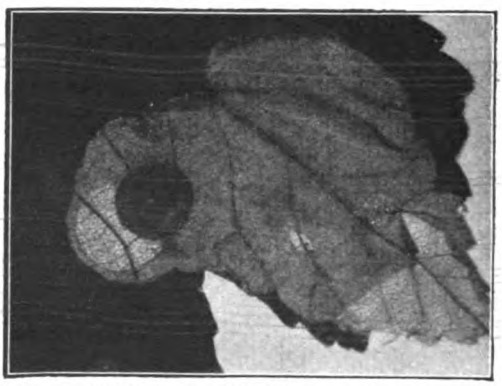


FIG. 9. WHEN THE SUNLIGHT WARMS THE LEAF, THE GRUB BECOMES EXTREMELY ACTIVE, AND WITH A SERIES OF CONSECUTIVE KICKS IT AT LAST DETACHES ITSELF COMPLETELY, AND SLIDES OFF THE LEAF IN ITS DISC TO THE GROUND TO TRAVEL TO ITS RESTING PLACE.

Note: This Fig. is photographed in ordinary light—not with light passing through the leaf as in Figs. 6, 7, and 8.

When the grub finds things too warm, it takes the silken lining at the edge of the disc firmly in its jaws, turns its tail-end to one side, and, by means of a curious clasper at that part, gets a firm hold of some of the silken network on that side. Then, with a powerful muscular effort, it suddenly swings its tail-end to the opposite side, stretching the threads to the utmost before letting go. Getting a grip on the other side, it then repeats the action from that direction, and so long as its mouth-parts retain the same hold, this action, on level ground, practically steers a definite course, but should the grub not find the moist and cool area that it seeks, it alters its "rudder" (by moving its jaws to another part of the disc edge) and then strikes out for a new course, the disc travelling on its convex centre. Its motor power amounts to a catapult action, which jerks the disc along until conditions satisfy its tenant.

It is interesting to note that the upper covering of the disc is not lined with silk, only with a layer of the gelatinous substance, which probably acts as a varnish-like protection against moisture.

The Sycamore Jumper is very similar to the Jumping Bean of Mexico, which in pre-war times was sold as a novelty in the London streets, and whose story I have previously told in THE STRAND MAGAZINE (April, 1915).

SOME SECRETS OF PIANOFORTE-PLAYING.

Can You Play a Scale?

By

MARK HAMBOURG.

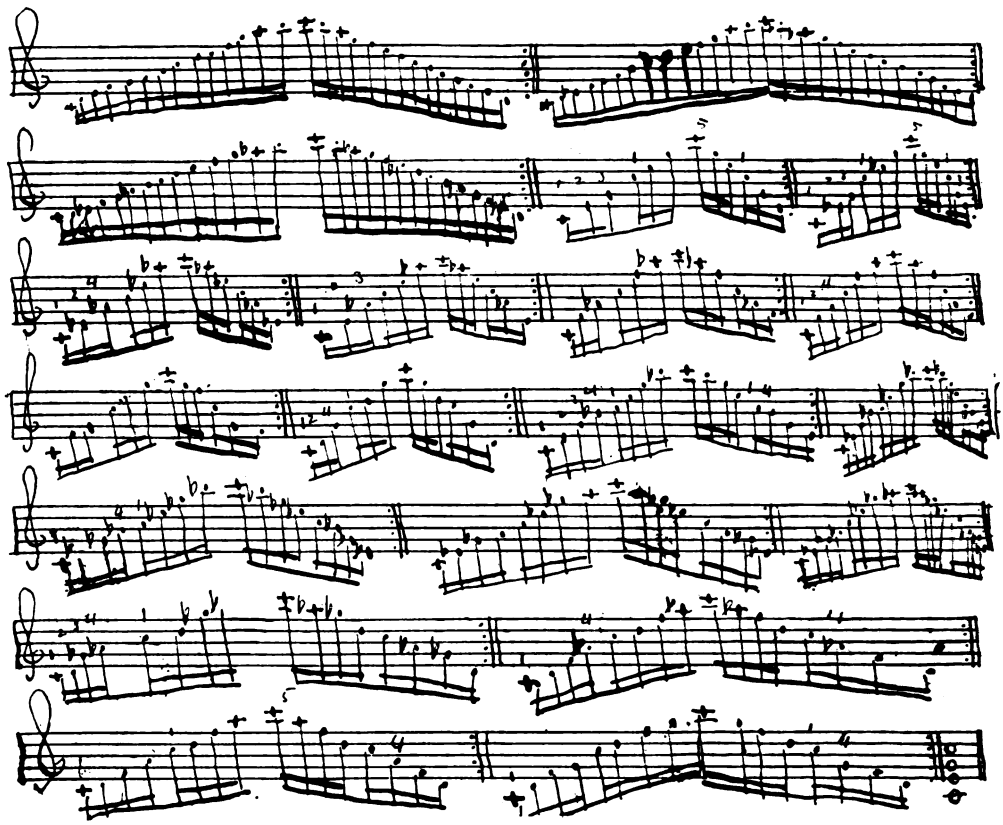
Photo. Swaine.

AMONG the many students who come and play to me and ask me for advice, the majority remind me of a well-known limerick about a certain young lady of Rio, whose skill was so scanty she played an *Andante* instead of *Allegro con brio !*

I must be excused for drawing attention to the young lady of Rio, but it is because her case is so true and typical of so many other young females—and also males—whose houses are much nearer London than Rio. I should like, therefore, to say a few words about attempting to play great masterpieces of pianoforte music without sufficient knowledge of technique, and especially of that immensely important branch of it, the mastery of scales. It has been my experience that whenever particularly young and raw students come to play to me and want to show what they can do, they invariably attempt such giant works as the Brahms-Handel Variations, or the Appassionata Sonata of Beethoven, or the Chopin Ballads. After they have finished playing a sonata or two (most often in *tempo andante*, like our friend of Rio), I ask them to play me a scale. They usually evince astonishment at my request, and answer that they never practise scales at all. If ever they do what I ask, their performance of them proves to be, as a rule, unrhythmical, uneven, and altogether unsatisfactory. Yet most pianoforte works contain passage-writing which is directly based upon scale progressions. I have known many advanced pianoforte students who are quite unable to arrive at any high standard of performance through lack of technical knowledge and want of proficiency in scale-playing. Who does not quote, at times, in referring to such performers, the hackneyed plea for indulgence: "He makes up in expression what he lacks in execution"? As if this excuse itself did not prove upon examination to be a sheer piece of nonsense. For where there is no sufficient command of execution the expression can only be halting, stilted, and ineffective. In a reproductive art, such as pianoforte-playing, the perfect rendering of all the emotions inspired by the music can only be obtained through unlimited control of technique, which, of course, implies absolute mastery of manual dexterity. So many talented amateurs who really wish to study their art to the backbone and attain professional proficiency do not realize that they must first acquire what is generally known amongst artists as a good "school." The word "school" used in this sense means a firm background of technical principles by which difficulties can be solved in the most logical and profitable manner. The acquirement of these principles can only be gained in the years of hard work which should precede any serious attempt at performance. It was interesting to me, in the light of my views on this subject, to have been present recently at the Dancing School of the Russian Ballet. Here their greatest stars practise every day, for several hours, technical exercises and steps which eventually constitute a wonderful and intricate ballet. And though to the impatient the mere study of scales may seem intolerably dull, yet it is a wonderful feeling to notice power growing gradually, and things becoming easy which at first seemed insurmountable.

On the piano there are many branches of virtuosity to be mastered, but none more essential than perfect scale-playing. Much of the bad fingering which impedes pianists from getting through passages of elaborate runs is due to ignorance of this important technical detail. Almost of equal necessity to scales are arpeggios, which should always be practised in conjunction with them, with every kind of different accent and rhythm. The serious student should make a point of studying these for at least one hour every day, playing scales and arpeggios in four different tonalities each day, and going through all their harmonic developments as set down in the table given at the head of the next page.

I believe in practising scales slowly, and playing each hand separately, and, above all, in working with the utmost concentration of the mind. One hour of concentrated practice is worth ten hours of mechanical repetition of difficulties by people who scarcely think what they are doing. Practising, even of scales, must never become mechanical, or the labour is vain.



SCALES AND ARPEGGIOS TO BE PRACTISED AS ABOVE VERY SLOWLY. GREAT ATTENTION TO BE PAID TO SMOOTH THUMB PASSAGE—EACH HAND SEPARATELY; FOUR TIMES EACH DIVISION, WITHOUT A BREAK; IN FOUR TONALITIES EACH DAY, VIZ.: FIRST DAY: C, C SHARP, D, E FLAT; SECOND DAY: E, F, F SHARP, G; THIRD DAY: A FLAT, A, B FLAT, B.

The student should always be intently listening, and be sure that no single note has an ugly sound, but that each is played with a musical touch and the tone produced is round and full. Even the most uninspiring exercises can be made to sound pleasing and harmonious if played with scrupulous attention to the quality of tone. It is to this end essential in scale-playing that a certain pressure should be given on the keys with every finger as it falls. The importance of this pressure lies not actually in itself, but in the principle it contains. For the action of making the effort of pressure upon each note gives a mental stimulus. This idea of continually renewed pressure to "activate" work is also advocated by some of the professors of physical culture. Springs are made in dumbbells for the hands of victims to press upon. These trainers of the body have realized by experience that unless the minds of their patients can be concentrated on their work by having to press the spring of the dumbbell, their actions soon become purely automatic and cease to exercise their muscles properly. So it is also on the pianoforte keyboard. The player's mind is kept alert by having to press the fingers down upon the keys, and being thus forced to think about what he is doing. For if the fingers merely run over the keyboard without attention, that kind of practice can do no possible good whatever. The mind must always be present like a general, whilst the fingers are the soldiers who obey his behests.

No doubt every beginner should seek out a good teacher to show him how to set about conquering difficulties, but however wonderful the teacher, it is up to the pupil to concentrate and see that his mind works in conjunction with his fingers. Hard work for the mastery of detail and unlimited concentration of thought are necessary for arriving at any really fine performance on the pianoforte. The fault of most players who come to me is that their preparation before attempting to attack a great work has not been sufficient. And for this the teacher must be held responsible to a certain degree, because, naturally desiring the pupil to make quick progress, he gives him Liszt's Rhapsodies and Beethoven's greatest sonatas to play after only a few months of perfunctory study. The students also have a natural desire to astonish their parents and gratify their patrons, and sometimes to justify the spending of a good deal of money on their musical education.

Most of them rely on so-called musical feeling, charming touch, and other elusive qualities, which have possibly been "enthused" over by their supporters! Thus they fritter away valuable time in chase of shadows, instead of settling down under a severe and accomplished master to genuine hard study of scales and other exercises.

I am constantly seeing advertisements by teachers of "how to play the piano in five minutes by correspondence"! But I know by my own experience that after thirty years of continuous study there are still many problems in piano-playing that I cannot solve.

There certainly are occasional geniuses whose exceptional powers and facilities for the pianoforte enable them to perform in public without having been through the workshop of the technical school. But these are few and far between, and upon inquiring closely about them it will generally be found that their labour and difficulty in mastering technical passages are immeasurably greater than those of other pianists with far less talent who have had the advantage of thorough schooling. They will most often complain bitterly themselves of the lack of that foundation of technique they never had the opportunity of acquiring, and the want of which continues to hamper them through life. In fact, one of the greatest living pianists, who was practically self-taught, once told me that he would have saved himself ten years of drudgery if he had been able to study one year with a great pianoforte teacher like Leschetizky. The hands and movements of such self-taught pianists, too, almost always look ungainly and distorted on the keyboard when playing awkward passages. And this is not only disturbing to the eye, but very often also to the quality of the sound, which quickly becomes laboured and heavy under severe strain. The player who "arrives" with such disabilities must indeed have genius for the piano! But there are not many such highly-gifted people in the world, who succeed in spite of every obstacle. I believe the inhabitants of this globe number over fifteen hundred millions, but amongst them all there are not more than a dozen really great pianists!

Therefore, student, learn to play scales carefully, tunefully, exactly, rhythmically, smoothly, and eventually quickly, and arpeggios evenly, clearly, and elegantly, before embarking upon the performance of the great works of pianoforte literature. Many cast up their eyes to Heaven in an inspired way while playing, hoping, I suppose, thereby to make up for lack of practice on this earth! But Heaven cannot help them if they have not learned to play scales and arpeggios properly.

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 70.

(The Fourth of the Series.)

SPRING, summer, autumn, winter—all are here,
Making complete the circuit of the year.

1. A lock of hair, adjunct to Beauty's dress,
   Assuredly is ever in distress.
2. A little word, and any tint will do:
   It may be red, although it rhymes with blue.
3. Think of the fiery mount in Sicily,
   And set the water boiling for your tea.
4. Mankind describes as pestilential curse
   What fisher takes for better or for worse.
5. Silken the robe may be, gorgeous the tint;
   Here we discard the half that is in print.
6. Relative article may hint afford
   That soap and water should not be ignored.
7. Euphrates, Shannon, Mississippi, Tyne,
   Nile, Severn, Congo, Amazon, and Rhine.

PAX.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 71.

CONFUSION worse confounded see,
If things in this condition be.

1. Now learn how aspirated snake
   May closure of your window make.
2. A sacred bird to find don't fail:
   But there! it surely has no tail.

3 and 4. The boat or trap of number three
We add to four, and laughter see.

5. Distinctive mark. If first be last,
   There's sound for future and for past.
6. A circuit whence we cannot skip,
   Or else divided by a lip.
7. Dearest and brightest, thee to win,
   Lo, I declare my love within.
8. What though for twelve long months we wait?
   Beheaded, it will not be late.

QUÆSTOR.

Answers to Acrostics 70 *and* 71 *should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor,* THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on October 8th.*

The solution to each acrostic must be on a separate piece of paper, and both must be signed with the solver's pseudonym. Two answers are permitted for each light.

ANSWER TO No. 69.

1. G	aeli	C
2. E	s	O
3. R	adica	L
4. M	alm	O
5. A	mazo	N
6. N	a	Y

NOTE.—Light 2. Aesop.

RESULT OF THE ELEVENTH SERIES.

One solver, Wals, answered all the acrostics correctly, and wins the first prize; a cheque for £1 12s. will be sent to him. Eleven competitors, Anvil, Forest, Junius, Lagual, Lobo, Malade, Manora, Omeleg, Singh, Yoko, and Zyme, scored 42 points out of a possible 43, and will receive prizes of £1 each. All these twelve winners will be ineligible for a prize in the twelfth series.

The successful solvers are: Wals, Mr. W. Stradling, Norris Hill, East Cowes, Isle of Wight; Anvil, Mr. C. Dance, 45, Cowick Road, Tooting, S.W.; Forest, Mr. P. E. Herrick, 49A, Tremaine Road, Anerley, S.E.20; Junius, Mr. F. C. W. Grigson, Amesbury, Hindhead, Surrey; Lagual, Mrs. Ellis, 333, Sandycombe Road, Kew Gardens; Lobo, Mrs. L. Morris, 74, Larch Road, Cricklewood, N.W.2; Malade, Mr. C. Duke, Gwynfa, Cheltenham; Manora, Mr. G. W. Sealy, 19, Redcliffe Gardens, S.W.10; Omeleg, Mr. G. L. Moore, 58, Rosebery Road, Muswell Hill, N.10; Singh, Mr. R. D. Aahbee, Church Hill House, Orpington, Kent; Yoko, Mr. F. Rawson, 10, Richmond Mansions, S.W.5; Zyme, Mr. J. W. Pulsford, 57, Deauville Road, Clapham, S.W.4.

Albert's Return

By EDGAR JEPSON

ALBERT was a weedy youth, but his country took him. To be exact, his country tore him away; for, though Albert was as ready to fight for her as the next man, he did not feel equal to it, and he shrank with a violent and inexpressible loathing from the needless discomforts and hardships of the British Tommy's life. He did not believe that he could stand them. But torn away he was; and his family bore the blow superbly.

Albert was not his family's pride. The Appletons were commercially and socially hard on the make; and he was not a credit to them. He entertained a profound doubt, with reason, that he ever would be a credit to them. So did they. He had not distinguished himself at the Clapton Commercial College for the Sons of Gentlemen. If the class to which he chanced to belong needed anyone to bring up its rear, Albert was there. He did not distinguish himself at games; the cricket and football were not of the first, or even of the fourth, class; but he shirked them. He could shirk most things as well as, or even better than, the next man. It was a gift.

It must be said in excuse of Albert that he was not strong. He had outgrown his strength, was anæmic, and enjoyed a poor digestion. The exercise of mental or physical energy soon tired him.

In Clapton he might have passed muster. But, rising in the world, his family migrated to Riverholm, a villa in the Belle Vue Avenue, Claybury, an outer and far genteeler suburb; and there they found him a drag on their social progress. When his father gloomily procured for him the post, at twenty-five shillings a week, of clerk in the packing department of the ironmongery firm for which he himself successfully travelled, they acquiesced gloomily. They felt that his position was the weak point in the rising fortunes of the family. Albert did not distinguish himself in business. Indeed, had not his father been so old, or, rather, to be exact, so useful a servant of the firm, he would not have held his job a fortnight.

The ladies of Claybury did not raise any outcry when Albert was torn away. With his sharp features, loose lips, and modest chin, he was not a handsome man, and his very blue eyes and good forehead did not make up for these defects in their critical eyes. He did not, as his sisters often complained, take a proper pride in his appearance. As he said, with his usual feeble cheerfulness, any old clothes were good enough for him; and his clothes always seemed old. Moreover, he had not a way with him. In the drawing-rooms of Claybury he was abashed.

The ladies of Claybury, and his family, thought far more highly of Albert's elder brother Frederick. He was everything that Albert was not. He had been an indefatigable prize-winner at the Clapton Commercial College for the Sons of Gentlemen. At cricket he had been a trustworthy stonewaller, as long as the bowling was fairly slow. He had grown up into a tall, plump, pompous young man, with regular features and a high colour. He was always spick and span. He enjoyed, indeed, a solidity of form, character, conversation, and position, which made him the joy of the ladies of Claybury. His country did not tear him away from them. As the chief buyer of an important firm of corset-makers, he was indispensable.

Since Albert, at the end of his three months' training, was still weedy and of a poor constitution, his country sent him to unhealthy Mesopotamia. His brothers and sisters bore his removal to this distance superbly. Only Mrs. Appleton was panic-stricken, and her terror never lessened. The long intervals between Albert's letters daunted her. These letters were her joy. If he had any sorrows, he did not confide them to her. His letters were always cheerful, even the two shakily-written letters, in which he did not tell her that he had nearly gone west after a bad bout of fever, and again after a serious wound. They were full of the things that mattered to her, details of his life and food, the skinniness of the poultry of Mesopotamia, the troubles of the Mesopotamian housekeeper; and always there were short affectionate passages in them.

One morning at breakfast she told the family proudly that Albert had become a corporal.

It received the news without elation. It had a soul above corporals.

His father said, in a tone that lacked hopefulness: "Perhaps the Army will make a man of Bert, after all."

"I doubt it," said Frederick, sagely. "He hasn't the brains."

The faces of Ermyntrude and Gwendolen expressed agreement.

"It might smarten him up a bit," said their father.

"I doubt it," said Frederick, in a judicial tone.

They let it go at that.

His mother did not inform the family of Albert's promotion to the rank of sergeant. She only spoke of him to his father, and that seldom.

When the maroons banged, and the hooters hooted, and the sirens shrieked, and the bells rang on Armistice morning, Mrs. Appleton sat down in the nearest chair and cried from a full heart.

Just before Christmas Frederick performed his great matrimonial exploit. At tea one evening he said, in a tone of great satisfaction :—

"I'm engaged to be married to Annie Brent."

His family gazed at him with amazed, incredulous eyes.

"Frederick!" cried Ermyntrude. "Why, she hasn't an 'h' to her name!"

"She was a munitioner—an ordinary munition girl at the beginning of the war," said Gwendolen.

"And her father was a foreman in a factory," said Ermyntrude.

"He's dead," said Frederick.

"I never could understand why Mrs. Bradley-Porter took her up," said Gwendolen, bitterly.

"M'm! She must have a tidy bit of money," said Mr. Appleton.

"Eleven thousand pounds," said Frederick, and the words seemed to fill his mouth.

Silence fell.

Then Frederick said, with solemn firmness: "I don't want to hear anything more about her father; and as for her 'h's,' she can learn. That's where I look to you girls. My idea is that she should come and live here till we're married. Three months in a refined home'll make all the difference. She isn't stupid, and she's quite aware of her deficiencies."

"And where am I going to put her?" said his mother.

"She can have Bert's room."

"She can't. Bert's room's going to be kept for Bert," said his mother.

"Now, what's the good of keeping it empty?" said Frederick, in some irritation. "She'll be a paying guest; and she'll pay well. She quite understands what a privilege living with us will be."

"Bert's room's going to be kept for Bert," said his mother, in a tone her children knew to be final.

Frederick scowled; he was used to having his way in the home. Then he said: "Well, what's the harm in her having his room till he comes back? Goodness knows when that'll be. We may be married months before then."

His mother hesitated. Then she said: "I don't mind doing that. But when he does come back out she goes."

So it was settled; and a week later Annie Brent came to live at Riverholm. Ermyntrude and Gwendolen admitted to one another that they would never feel that she was the right wife for Frederick. They had always seen his wife as tall, buxom, high-coloured, and striking, like themselves, a woman well qualified to shove him up the social ladder; and that, they knew, had been his own vision of her. Annie was but of middle height and slender. Her nose was tip-tilted and her mouth a little large; but her skin was clear and of an attractive warm tint. Her brown eyes were large, and her abundant, soft brown hair had an attractive way of catching sunbeams and holding them. For all her Cockney accent, her voice was low and sweet; and, thanks to many half-hours with the manicurists, her hands had lost all traces of the munition factory.

She came, and was plainly impressed deeply by the Appleton family, and grateful indeed for her admission to it. All of them patronized her, Mrs. Appleton quietly, her husband pompously, Frederick with an immense pomposity, and Ermyntrude and Gwendolen whenever they were not busy with something else. It was one of the most important principles regulating their lives never to cheapen themselves; and they did not cheapen themselves to Annie. She took it as a matter of course. They were ladies and gentlemen. She was bent on becoming a lady, for before he had made more than eight hundred pounds her father had often declared himself bent on making her one. She felt it to be her duty to become a lady, a pious duty; and, since she was quick-witted and adaptable, she made uncommon progress towards becoming a lady of the Claybury type.

Sometimes, indeed, she sighed. She did not find the great satisfaction she had expected from leading the ladylike life. She found herself looking back with regret for the greater freedom and richer life of her early days in Biddles Row. She reproached herself for this vulgar regret.

Mrs. Appleton soon ceased to patronize her. She found her even more lacking in housekeeping than in genteelness, and set about teaching her. She found her a cheerful, painstaking, and useful pupil. Ermyntrude and Gwendolen were too busy with their war-work to help in the house. They organized entertainments in aid of war charities, and came into frequent and friendly contact not only with the best people in Claybury, but even with persons from the polite world.

Presently Mrs. Appleton fell into the way of talking to Annie as she had talked to no one since Albert was torn away. She found her of a sympathetic temperament. Naturally she talked to her of Albert, the chief subject of her thought. Then she showed her a letter which came from him, and then all the letters that had come from him, so that Annie learned much about him. She liked the Albert of the letters, and could not understand why Frederick and his sisters had so poor an opinion of him.

Then on an afternoon in early spring came an astonishing telegram. Albert had landed in England, and would reach Waterloo at a quarter-past five. His mother had not expected him before August, and that telegram was the shock of her life. Ermyntrude and Gwendolen were far too busy organizing the Claybury Peace Fair to go with her to Waterloo. Therefore Annie

went with her. For the first time in her life the capable Mrs. Appleton needed someone to look after her, and Annie brought her there safely and on time.

Mrs. Appleton, still flustered, would never have found Albert in the crowd; and she was used to an Albert who needed to be found, since he never found anyone himself. But he found her at once, and hugged her with a vigour she found as strange as it was pleasant. Then she presented him to Annie, who found him very different from the picture of him which had formed in her mind. He was taller and smarter, and his eyes were very blue in his tanned face. As they came out of the station into the bitter air of the dreary spring day, he shivered, and admitted that, but for his overcoat, he was clad in his Tropical kit. His mother cried out at the negligence of the War Office. Annie came firmly to the rescue. She said that their usual route across London, with its waits and changes, was impossible for him, and took a taxi. They put Albert between them to keep him warm.

Mrs. Appleton talked, asking many questions. Albert's answers were brief; he seemed to have grown sparing of his words.

Half-way home, she said: "You must be glad to be back in London?"

He looked out of the left-hand window, and then out of the other, and said, soberly: "Looks a bit cramped and poky."

Annie looked at the dingy, grey scene, and perceived that he was right. London had never before presented itself to her as poky. She would not allow Mrs. Appleton to share the cost of the taxi. From her early days in Biddle's Row she had retained the feeling that, when you had it, money should be spent, and she liked spending it.

The rest of the family welcomed Albert with sufficient warmth. They were glad that he had come safe out of the war. At tea they questioned him for a while about his life in Mesopotamia; then the talk fell upon the usual subjects. Frederick and their father talked about business, Ermyntrude and Gwendolen about the social round. Albert seemed to fall into a reverie on his own affairs. His mother observed with pleasure that he was no longer a delicate feeder, but had brought back a sound appetite. Annie observed that he looked at her hard and often, and she found it not unpleasing. Frederick never seemed really to see her. Also, she had not missed the patronizing tone in which they had all spoken to Albert. It inspired in her a fellow-feeling with him. Once, too, when Frederick patronized her with excessive pompousness, she saw Albert give him a queer, hard look. For the first time it dawned upon her that Frederick's patronizing attitude was not quite that of a fond lover. She perceived also that it gave her no pleasure.

After tea Mrs. Appleton called on Frederick to help her move Annie's belongings from Albert's room to the attic in which their servant had slept before she went to a munition factory, and they had to be content with a daily servant. Albert protested; Annie insisted. There was something of a conflict, and Albert won. His father, forced by his business to be more observant than his offspring, perceived yet another change in Albert; his chin had filled out and his lips had set.

Next morning Albert went out after breakfast and came back wearing a pair of warm gloves and two wound-stripes on the sleeve of his tunic. His mother cried out at them. Why hadn't he told her in his letters that he had been wounded? Albert said that there had been nothing to be gained by it. She would have worried about the wounds, and they would have healed none the sooner. Nevertheless, she felt defrauded.

He settled down at Riverholm with calm content. His mother and Annie found him uncommonly helpful with the housework. He went with them on their household shopping in the mornings, and he fell into the way of going with Annie on her walks, or shopping expeditions, in the afternoon. They found him very good company; for, though he was apt to be silent at meals and in the drawing-room when visitors called, he talked with them easily enough. They both of them preferred his conversation to that of those visitors. Several times he took Annie to the cinema, and once to a music-hall. They were soon on the friendliest terms, and that friendliness was very much strengthened on Annie's part by the fact that he was the one person in the house with whom she found herself wholly at ease.

She felt that Frederick belonged to another world. She was in no awe of him, but she found him hard to talk to. He seemed only interested in making money and in the social ascent. She did not undervalue the importance of these things, but generally she wanted to talk about other things—about herself and the Frederick which must surely underlie the business and social Frederick. Moreover, Albert made it much plainer than did Frederick that he thought her a very pretty girl.

A fortnight slipped away, and Albert seemed to grow more and more content with his lot. He had received his discharge and part of his bonus, and had clad himself in mufti, a suit of rather rough brown tweed. Annie thought that he outshone Frederick. Frederick looked prosperous and spick-and-span, always quite the gentleman, as they said in Claybury; but she noticed that the eyes of other girls, in the streets and trains and trams, did not rest on Frederick with the approving interest with which they rested on Albert. Albert looked so much smarter, so much more alive. Not that the Claybury girls looked at him with much approval, for they knew that he had been only a sergeant, and was unlikely to succeed in business.

At the end of that fortnight, while Albert remained contented, his brother and sisters were not. They began to grow restive. It irked Frederick that Albert should enjoy his idle ease at home, while he himself went every day to business. Moreover, the cost of supplying Albert's healthy appetite must tend to lower the richness of the family food. Ermyntrude

"HE WAS TALLER AND SMARTER, AND HIS EYES WERE VERY BLUE IN HIS TANNED FACE."

and Gwendolen also suffered under a double grievance; the cost of Albert's food lessened their pocket money, and, living at home, he was far too often brought to the notice of their friends, to the detriment of the Appleton social prestige. Discussing their grievances with one another, they grew bitter. Frederick unburdened himself of his grievances to Annie, and was annoyed by the little sympathy he had from her.

"You seem to be on the side of the slacker!" he cried, indignantly.

"But he isn't a slacker. You can't call anyone a slacker who was nearly two years fighting in Mesopotamia," she protested.

"Oh, that!" said Frederick, contemptuously.

Since their father was making a round of the Northern cities, he took steps himself to abate their grievance.

At tea a few nights later he said to Albert: "I went round to Harrowby and Johnston's to-day and put it to them, and they said that your old job was open and you could go back to it. I stuck out for a higher salary, but all they would agree to was thirty shillings a week. They said that you chaps coming back from the Army took such a long time getting into your work again that you weren't worth more."

Albert looked at him with the new hardness which came into his face on occasion, and said: "I'm much obliged. But they can keep their job. I don't want it."

Frederick was taken aback by this directness. He had expected that at the worst Albert would try to shuffle out of it, and that he would merely have to be firm with him.

"But what are you going to do? You can't go on hanging about home, idling. We don't want that kind of thing here," he said, tartly.

Albert's eyes grew harder, and he said: "I'm going to mind my own business for one thing."

"But it is Fred's business! It's all of our business!" cried Ermyntrude.

"Well, I'm going to take all the rest I want," said Albert, slowly and firmly. "As for hanging about home, there wouldn't be any home to hang about, if I and the chaps like me hadn't fought for it. And when I've had my rest I'm going to find a job in the country—not in this poky hole, where you can't see a hundred yards either way."

Frederick gasped. This was insensate folly.

"A job in the country? You?" he cried. "What do you know about country work? What kind of a job do you think you'll get?"

"Well, I talked it over with a pal of mine in Mesopotamia, and he said I could learn to be a bailiff easily enough. It's mostly seeing that other people do their work, and I've got used to doing that."

"But who's going to give you a bailiff's job? Who's going to employ an ignoramus as a bailiff?" said Frederick, in a tone of exasperation.

"I can learn, and I'm going to," said Albert.

"And how are you going to live while you're learning?" said Frederick.

"I've the rest of my bonus coming, and I've saved a bit of money," said Albert.

"Then all I can say is, the sooner you go and begin to learn the better. I'm sure we don't want you hanging about, idling, at home," said Frederick.

"Fred's right about that," said Ermyntrude.

"No, he isn't," said Mrs. Appleton, with decision. "Bert's right. He's been fighting for us, and having a hard time, while we've been living in comfort at home. He's welcome to stay here till he's had all the rest he wants."

The subject was dropped. But Frederick was bitterly annoyed. He knew himself to be the shining, successful light of the home, and he expected his fiat to prevail in it without question. For once it had very plainly not prevailed. He was aggrieved as well as annoyed. Then Annie made a slip in her grammar. He seized the opportunity of easing his mind, and set her right with a scornful directness. Annie flushed. She had liked being set right till Albert came; she did not like to be treated with such contempt before him.

Albert looked at Frederick with hard eyes, and said: "Your manners don't seem to have improved since I went away."

"I must trouble you to mind your own business," said Frederick, haughtily.

"I'll make it my business to see you behave like a gentleman to Annie while I'm about," said Albert, and his eyes were yet harder.

"A fine judge of what is gentlemanly you are, speaking like a common private!" cried Frederick.

"That's enough! I won't have you boys quarrelling!" cried Mrs. Appleton, quickly.

The rest of the evening passed peacefully. The sulky Frederick was not talkative. Ermyntrude and Gwendolen discussed details of the Claybury Peace Fair. Then, as usual, the women went off to bed, leaving Albert and Frederick to finish their pipes. Frederick maintained a sulky, dignified silence; he was aware that Albert was considering him thoughtfully. When Frederick knocked the ashes out of his pipe and rose, Albert rose too. He took hold of Frederick's upper-arm with fingers which seemed composed wholly of bone, if not of something harder.

"Fred, you're soft—very soft," he said, in a dispassionate tone, pressing those bony fingers into the fat. "Soft men should be civil—damned civil. You be civil to Annie."

He loosed Frederick's arm and added, slowly and wistfully: "I should like to have you in a new squad—for a matter of three weeks. I'd make you smart; there must be the making of a man in you—somewhere."

He went out of the room without saying "Good night," and left Frederick gasping. His mind, grappling with a new, horrid fact, was not very clear; but he felt that Riverholm was growing too small to hold both him and Albert.

Soon after breakfast next morning Annie got Albert to herself, and said, with considerable severity: "You'd no call—no business, I mean—to interfere last night. I can take care of myself all right."

"I know you can," said Albert, cheerfully.

"Then what did you go for to—I mean, why did you do it?" said Annie, somewhat disarmed by his ready agreement.

"I don't know. I did it without thinking. Fred was rude; and I can't stick anyone's being rude to you. If he hadn't been engaged to you I'd have had him out of the room by the scruff of the neck. I expect I shall next time—if there is a next time—before I know what I'm doing, you know. I can't wait to think when it's you."

"But you just wait to think. I don't want you to interfere. I want to be a lady. I mean to be a lady. And I've got to be shown," she said, firmly.

"Then you must be shown nicely when I'm about," said Albert.

"Oh, if you think I mind being spoken sharply to, I don't. I was always being told off proper—properly—in the old days."

"These aren't the old days, and, anyhow, it's all rot. With you it's—it's—it's like painting the lily."

"There you go again. You're always saying queer things like that. Where do you get them from? Fred never says things like that," said Annie, curiously.

"What's wrong with Fred is he's blind," said Albert, and he looked at her fairly and squarely with admiring eyes.

Annie blushed and said, quickly: "But what does make you think of them?"

"Why, you'd make anyone think of them," said Albert, with conviction. "But I learnt, too, on guard under those stars—large and right on top of you, you know—and a broad plain farther than you could see—and no noise but a dog or a jackal howling far away. You learn—oh, lots of things; and the things you used to know—well, they look different. And you're on guard pretty often, you know; so you get time to think."

"I shouldn't like it—all that loneliness," said Annie, with a little shiver.

"No one's supposed to like it. But it grows on you in a queer kind of way."

"It wouldn't grow on me," she said.

He looked at her with thoughtful, considering eyes; then he said: "No; you're for the home and the warm fire." He paused, and his eyes went dreamy. Then he added: "All the same, you'd be all right in a meadow—in summer—

or in a wood. Yes, you'd be quite all right among flowers and trees—or milking a cow."

"Those sort of things would do me a fair—I mean, I should like them very much," she said, quickly, in lively agreement. "You do know about things, Bert."

After the failure to get Albert to his old job, there was a change in the atmosphere of Riverholm. Frederick and Ermyntrude and Gwendolen grew very disagreeable with him. If he spoke to them they ignored or snubbed him. They never spoke to him if they could help it, but they talked at him without ceasing. They said all the unpleasant things they could devise about the men who had come back from the Army; they said that they were slackers and loafers; they even said that those of them who had enlisted had done so to escape from honest work and lead a life of idleness.

Albert was quite unruffled by their Claptonic jibes, but Annie grew angrier and angrier. She was always taking up the cudgels on behalf of the returned warriors. Once in a moment of generous but incautious warmth she infuriated Frederick by asserting, with evident honesty, that she preferred the warriors to those who had stayed at home in comfort and safety. He took it to himself, and treated her with the loftiest iciness for two days.

Naturally their hostility to Albert drew her closer to him. She had to be kinder to a man harrassed by such gross injustice. She heaped little gifts on him—cigarettes, a cigarette-case, gloves, a cane. She took him to *matinées* at West-end theatres. She scolded him when he gave her a lace handkerchief and a pair of silk stockings, and tried to make him let her pay for their teas when they went to the theatre. Sometimes she found it impossible to have her way with Albert.

An accident changed again the atmosphere of Riverholm.

Two days before the Claybury Peace Fair Ermyntrude talking about it, said three times: "As dear Lady Flaunden said."

The third time she said it Albert said: "Lady Flaunden—she'd be Sandy's mother."

Ermyntrude gave him a cold and steely glance, was on the point of ignoring him, paused, and said with icy hauteur: "Are you alluding to the Honourable Alexander Sarratt?"

"Yes; that's Sandy," said Albert, carelessly. "What were you saying about Monday, Annie?"

"But did you know him?" said Ermyntrude, raising her voice.

"Know him? He was my pal," said Albert, impatiently. He paused, then went on, in a reminiscent voice: "And a useful pal he was. He'd had a year and a half more of it than I had—he was one of those volunteers who went into the Army for comfort you're so down on—and he helped me a lot. And we got our stripes together—corporal's and sergeant's."

"Do you mean to say he was a private?" cried Ermyntrude.

"Of course he was a private," said Albert.

"The Honourable Alexander Sarratt a private?" said Ermyntrude, in a tone of some stupefaction. "He couldn't have been! How do you know it was the Honourable Alexander Sarratt?"

"I had a letter from his mother, for one thing," said Albert.

"From Lady Flaunden? What about?" said Ermyntrude.

The eyes of Albert's family were glued to his face in a gaze of absorbed and impassioned interest.

Of a sudden Albert looked exceedingly bored. "Oh, there was a scrap," he said, grumpily. "We went out to do in some Arabs who had been giving trouble—not enough of us, of course. And we were cut off—we always were. And two officers were napooed, and the others were duds and went dotty. So I carried on—somebody had to—and Sandy helped. And we got out somehow,

"'FRED, YOU'RE SOFT—VERY SOFT,' HE SAID."

wounded and all. And Sandy got two bullets in him while I'd only one. So I had to help him; and we got back after the others."

"Do you mean you actually took command?" said Frederick, in an incredulous tone.

"Somebody had to," said Albert.

"And you saved the Honourable Alexander Sarratt's life?" said Gwendolen.

"That's what he must have told his mother—at least, judging from her letter. But I could never see it. I told him so. If I hadn't brought him in somebody else would. Besides, he'd have done as much for me any day."

"Did you actually carry him on your back?" said Ermyntrude, in a hushed voice.

"How could I carry him? He weighs twelve stone odd," said Albert, in some exasperation. "I helped him crawl, or lugged him along."

"But why didn't you tell us about it?" said Gwendolen. "Where is he? Is he still in Mesopotamia?"

"Of course he isn't!" snapped Albert. "They must have got the wires going on Armistice Day for him, for he went off three days afterwards. I expect he's in London, or at Flaunden."

"In London? And you haven't looked him up?" cried Frederick, in a sudden anguish of exasperation.

"Why, you might have got him down here—to afternoon tea!" cried Ermyntrude, in no less anguish.

"I shouldn't think of doing anything of the kind," said Albert, stiffly. "If he wants to see me, he'll hunt me up. This is different from out there; he'll have his old friends."

"Do you really mean to say that you're going to let a chance like this slip?" said Frederick, in a yet louder exasperation.

"Do you realize that you might have been moving in *Society* for weeks?" cried Gwendolen.

"If Sandy wants to see me, he knows where to find me," said Albert, in a tone of finality.

"I shall make a point of telling Lady Flaunden first thing to-morrow morning. I'm sure she'd never forgive me, if I let her remain in ignorance," said Ermyntrude.

Albert turned sharply towards her; his jaw shot out, and his eyes sparkled.

"You won't!" he said, harshly. "You mind your own business and leave mine alone!"

Ermyntrude shrank back, and the others gazed at him in astonished consternation.

"W-w-well, I never! W-w-what a way to speak!" stammered Ermyntrude.

"I don't want anyone interfering in my concerns. See?" said Albert, truculently, and his eyes, hostile and challenging, moved slowly from one to the other.

"No one wants to interfere in your concerns," said Gwendolen, almost meekly.

Albert went on with his tea. There was silence for a while, then the others began to talk again, heavily, their eyes and voices aggrieved.

Annie kept looking at Albert with a new interest. She meant to hear more about this fighting and about Sandy. She did. Next day the reluctant Albert talked to her about little but fighting and Sandy. She drew from him the story of four scraps, as he called them. It astonished her that Albert should have killed two Germans with the bayonet, and shot or bombed sundry Turks and Arabs.

"I don't know how it is, but in a scrap I seem to be so much more on the spot than in other things. I see at once what to do, and I do it at once," he said, in a tone of apology, paused, and added: "That's why I think I should make a good bailiff."

She gathered that, though he acquiesced in the Honourable Alexander Sarratt's neglect of him, it hurt him.

At tea Ermyntrude and Gwendolen and Frederick talked to one another sadly about men who threw away great chances in life. Frederick told sad stories of business acquaintances who had done so. Albert appeared unmoved, but Annie grew restive.

At last she said: "I think Albert's quite right. It doesn't show a proper spirit to go running after people who don't want you."

Frederick turned sharply to her, opened his mouth, shut it hard and quickly on the reproof of his tongue, and looked at Albert.

"Ah, you've a lot to learn about Society," said Ermyntrude, in a tone of lofty patronage.

"That isn't how a man of the world looks at it," said Frederick.

"I haven't any patience with such silly, old-fashioned ideas," said Gwendolen.

Albert showed no great enthusiasm in the matter of going to the Claybury Peace Fair; but Annie insisted that he should escort his mother and her to it, and he went. They found the Drill Hall, in which it was held, full of people, and the stalls and side-shows were in a lively bustle. Two young women seized on Annie and carried her and Mrs. Appleton to the stall at which they were selling. Albert was separated from them. Gwendolen, in passing, paused to tell Annie to be sure to buy at Lady Flaunden's stall.

Then she said, anxiously: "Did you bring Albert? The Honourable Alexander Sarratt is coming."

"Yes, Albert's here," said Annie.

"That's all right. They'll meet," said Gwendolen, in a tone of lively expectation, and she hurried away.

It was some time before Annie enjoyed a respite from the importunities of the saleswomen. Then she looked about for Albert. She did not see him. She hunted for him, but she did not find him. Plainly he had had his fill of the fun of that fair, and gone. She was vexed; she had wished to share that fun with him. She went about disconsolately; it had grown dull. The fortune-teller, who bade her beware of a fair man with blue eyes, did not cheer her; the "Fantastics," who sang indifferently music-hall songs she knew, did not cheer her. She stayed on in hope to see the superior Sandy; he did not come. Of a sudden she came to the conclusion that she was bored. She came out of the Drill Hall and walked briskly home.

She opened the front door of Riverholm

quietly, and a rich smell of hot buttered toast smote on her nostrils. Perfidious Albert! A solitary, gorging sybarite! Then she heard him speak in the dining-room. He was not alone. She opened the door quietly, looked in, and opened her eyes wide.

The table had been pushed back against the wall, and on the floor, before the blazing fire, sat a tall, thick, red-haired man, and Albert. Either held a breakfast-cup in his right hand, and a slice of toast in his left. On a plate on the floor between them stood a pile of buttered toast, and beside it stood the large earthenware teapot with the broken spout.

"EITHER HELD A BREAKFAST-CUP IN HIS RIGHT HAND, AND A SLICE OF TOAST IN HIS LEFT."

"And it's just like living under a lousy old blanket," said Albert, ending a sentence in the sententious vein.

"That's right," said the companion, thickly, through hot buttered toast.

Albert looked up and saw Annie.

"Halloa! It's Annie," he said, calmly, in a tone of satisfaction. "Come and sit down and have a meal in decent comfort. I'll get you a cup."

He rose, and his companion rose and turned to her, displaying a freckled face, with a long slit of a mouth in it, and a large, engaging grin.

"This is Sandy—Mr. Sarratt," said Albert. "Miss Brent, my brother's *fioncey*."

Annie bowed; the Honourable Alexander Sarratt shook her warmly by the hand, and his grin spread out yet larger over his face.

"The beggars who stayed at home get all the luck," he said, looking at her with unaffected admiration.

"Not in the way of pals," said Albert, smiling at him.

"That's right," said the Honourable Alexander Sarratt, smiling at Albert.

Annie smiled at both of them.

Albert fetched a cup and teaspoon for her, and she sat down on the floor between them. She observed that they ate their buttered toast with an air of extraordinary satisfaction.

Once the Honourable Alexander Sarratt said, happily: "This carpet is better than sand."

"Cleaner—and no flies," said Albert.

"That's right," said the Honourable Alexander Sarratt.

She found herself taking part in their talk easily. Their exalted guest neither awed nor embarrassed her. He wiped his buttery fingers on his beautiful new trousers with the pleased air of a man performing an action of great merit. She gathered that he had not suspected even that Albert had returned home, and that he had scolded him severely for not having at once informed him. She learned, too, that he had had the bailiff's cottage at Flaunden painted, papered, and furnished for him, and that they were going down there the day after the morrow.

"I'm just longing to have Albert there," he said to her. "I want someone who knows about the things I like talking about, and I want a friend who will occasionally let me have a meal in decent comfort on the floor. I tried it at the Grange once, and just missed being shoved into a lunatic asylum."

"People don't know what comfort is," said Albert, sadly.

"That's right," said the Honourable Alexander Sarratt.

Annie was surprised at the sinking of the heart with which she learned that Albert was leaving Riverholm. It spoiled the pleasure she was enjoying from seeing him and his friend together. She rallied; but a blankness kept invading her spirit. The future had of a sudden grown barren.

They talked till it was time to lay the table for the family tea; and all three of them laid it. They had just done when Frederick arrived. His eye rested on the freckled stranger with a faint, cold suspicion. When he heard his name he was effusiveness itself; on the instant he was all over the Honourable Alexander Sarratt. Annie observed a sudden change in the Honourable Alexander Sarratt's manner; there was not a touch of superiority in it; but he con-

trived to be extremely civil to Frederick from, roughly speaking, two thousand yards away. Twice, too, his eyes turned from Frederick to her with an odd wonder in them; and she found herself blushing. Soon he took his leave of them and went.

At tea Frederick was loud in his approval of him; Albert knew the right kind of man to make a friend of. When he heard that Albert was going to live in the country forthwith, he gave it as his considered opinion that he would be much better for at least another fortnight's quiet rest at home. Ermyntrude and Gwendolen agreed with him warmly; surely, too, Albert would like to stay on at Claybury and see some more of his friend after their long separation. Albert said dryly that Sandy was going to the country too.

He did not appear to exult at the early realization of his dream. He appeared rather to be gloomy. At first Annie was surprised; she had expected him to be overjoyed. Then his eyes met hers twice; and she guessed, or rather, to be exact, she knew that something of her own blankness of spirit had invaded him. She felt glad that he would really miss her, and at once reproached herself for that gladness.

Next day he went about his preparations heavily. His mother and Annie went carefully through his scanty wardrobe, mending. They went with him to buy more clothes for country wear. They did not go to the Peace Fair; they stayed at home to keep him company. His mother talked away; but neither he nor Annie said much.

Then Mrs. Appleton went into the kitchen to see that the servant cooked properly the fish for tea. Albert stood before the fire; Annie sat in the chair on the right of it. Both looked frankly miserable; neither seemed to have anything to say.

He put his fingers into his waistcoat pocket, drew out a little thing wrapped in tissue paper, and unwrapped it.

"I've got something for you—a keepsake," he said. "I—I got it near Bagdad."

He bent forward and dropped a ring in her lap. She caught at it quickly and looked at it. It was an Eastern ring, a ruby in a thin gold setting.

"Oh, how pretty!" she cried, slipped it on her finger, and gazed at it with sparkling eyes.

"When I got it I thought I would give it to my best girl, if ever I had one," he said, slowly.

"Oh, but you must! You must keep it for her!" cried Annie, slipping it off and holding it out to him.

"No. You're going to have it. I sha'n't ever have a best girl. I don't feel I want one," said Albert, quickly.

Annie gazed up at him earnestly; and slowly her eyes grew miserable. Then of a sudden they grew rather wild and hungry; she rose to her feet, her lips quivering, her face moving, wrung her hands, and cried:—

"Oh, Bert! Why didn't you come back three months sooner?"

Albert gasped and flushed, stared hard at her, said in a hoarse and shaky voice: "It's like that, is it?" and caught her to him.

"But, Fred? Fred?" she cried, struggling to free herself.

"Oh, Fred! I'll settle Fred all right," he said, scornfully. "If a man doesn't know a good thing when he's got it, he deserves to lose it."

He held her tightly and kissed her.

"'OH, HOW PRETTY!' SHE CRIED, AS SHE SLIPPED THE RING ON HER FINGER AND GAZED AT IT WITH SPARKLING EYES."

Minds That Work While Bodies Sleep

SOME AUTHENTICATED CASES OF A MUCH DOUBTED PHENOMENON

By

EDWIN F. BOWERS M.D.

THE impossible is the thing we don't believe; the incredible the thing we have not yet seen. Both are states of mind common to the average human being. That is why any account dealing with manifestations of the subliminal mind—that mind which works while we sleep and at all other times, and which so few understand—must always be bolstered up with affidavits and attestations if it is to carry conviction. That is why the phenomena of unconscious cerebral and bodily activity have been considered, even by scientists, as old wives' tales.

And yet, among medical reports of abnormal mental conditions, and in the Proceedings of the Psychical Research Society, hundreds, if not thousands, of well-authenticated cases of most extraordinary activities of sleeping persons have been recorded. In some instances the mental feats accomplished far transcended the normal capabilities of the individual.

Turning Sleep into Money.

Such a case is the intuition—or perhaps it was the clear subconscious grasp of business detail—of a Russian banker who was addicted to the habit of getting up at night and looking over his papers while asleep. The banker had been examining the prospectus of an oil company about to be formed, in which he had planned to buy an interest. After mature deliberation with his objective mind (the mind we use while awake) he decided not to "take a chance."

However, a few days later his agents told him that, following his instructions, they had bought heavily for his account, at the same time showing him a letter in his handwriting authorizing this purchase—a letter he had written while somnambulistic, and of which he had not the slightest conscious recollection. Within two years the banker had added five hundred thousand pounds to his account—which puts him in the championship class of sleep-walking money-makers.

But, while one person does something constructive during a somnambulistic attack, a dozen do some destructive or absurdly foolish thing. Such, for instance, is the case of a titled Englishman who, missing his shirts almost at the rate of one a night, accused his valet of stealing them. The very next night the erratic nobleman was seen stealing out in his pyjamas, carrying a soft-fronted shirt under his arm.

"A RUSSIAN BANKER WHO WAS ADDICTED TO THE HABIT OF GETTING UP AT NIGHT AND LOOKING OVER HIS PAPERS WHILE ASLEEP."

"THE ERRATIC NOBLEMAN SECURED A SPADE, DUG A SHALLOW GRAVE, AND BURIED HIS SHIRT."

Proceeding cautiously to the back of the barn, he secured a spade, dug a shallow grave, and buried his shirt. Investigation showed that all the remaining shirts had been interred in the same way.

She Hid Her Ring from Herself.

Dr. John D. Quackenbos, of New York, tells me of an instance in which a patient, a young woman well known as a successful writer of short stories, was taking treatments by hypnotic suggestion which materially increased her powers of concentration and quickened her imaginative faculties. Through an oversight on the part of one of the nurses, she was permitted to leave for home while in a somnambulistic condition.

When she "came to" the next morning, she found that a valuable diamond ring was missing. Calling on the doctor, she made known her loss, adding that she had the impression that she had given the ring to a beggar.

Dr. Quackenbos immediately put her into the hypnotic condition, and gave her strong suggestions to the effect that when she returned to her home she would remember where she had hidden her ring.

Within an hour she called up, exclaiming: "Doctor, I've found my ring in the lining of an old muff—a muff I was going to give away to-day."

A Sleeping Novelist.

Dr. Quackenbos himself is a rare and remarkable example of constructive somnambulistic activities, for some of his rather voluminous writing is done while he is objectively sound asleep.

It is his practice to arm himself with pad and pencil on retiring. On awaking in the morning he frequently finds that he has covered sheet after sheet of paper with a perfectly coherent essay. It was in this manner that Dr. Quackenbos wrote his fascinating study called "Body and Spirit."

In this connection it may be interesting to know that Dr. Quackenbos holds firmly that anyone who will take the trouble to cultivate the faculty can develop a psychic mental stream which will inevitably sweep ideas, impressions, and memorizations into objective consciousness, there to be utilized in solving business problems, and in assisting in the conception, construction, and completion of all work of a creative nature.

He advocates that one should comfortably compose himself and go to sleep for an hour or more with the problem, the story-germ, or what not, firmly fixed in mind. When the objective mind relinquishes the burden of thought—in other words, when the subject goes to sleep—the subconscious mind takes the matter up and carries it forward, together with the memory impressions of the subject.

The Sleep-Swimmer.

A most interesting case, showing the unique co-ordination between muscle and mind in a somnambulistic subject, is recorded in which a young man, totally unable to swim in his normal waking condition, was accustomed to getting up at night two or three times a week and swimming across a river two miles wide.

Psychologists insist that, were this young man to be awakened while swimming, he would inevitably drown, for his objective mind could not transmit to his motor nervous system the impulses toward actions with which it was not itself acquainted.

This is supposedly the same form of mental and muscular correlation that enables the sleep-walker to walk fearlessly, and usually with safety, upon some precarious ledge or dizzying height.

"SOME OF HIS RATHER VOLUMINOUS WRITING IS DONE WHILE HE IS OBJECTIVELY SOUND ASLEEP."

While the erratic antics of the sleep-walker usually have a "happy ending," the uniformly accepted belief that no accident ever befalls him unless he be suddenly awakened is fallacious. Numerous deaths from accidents to sleep-walkers testify to this.

A most remarkable case of somnambulism, combined with "externalization of faculties" and other psychic powers, was reported by a famous alienist and neurologist only a few months ago.

The subject was a Bavarian peasant girl, simple, good-hearted, and very ignorant. The gentleman in whose home the girl worked as a domestic was a student of psychic phenomena and a hypnotist of considerable skill. He had, it seems, developed a wonderful telepathic rapport with this girl, and had brought her to his friend, the neurologist, for experimental work.

Thrown into the cataleptic state by hypnosis, the girl would inhale deep draughts from a bottle of the strongest ammonia, under the suggestion that it was perfume of roses. She chewed a strychnia tablet, perhaps the bitterest thing in the world, with gusto and relish, under the belief that it was sugar. Blank cartridges were fired off behind her head without producing a single quaver of shock appreciation. Tested as to her accuracy in telepathy, it was found that she could read her employer's every thought.

"THE SLEEP-WALKER WALKS FEARLESSLY, AND USUALLY WITH SAFETY, UPON SOME PRECARIOUS LEDGE OR DIZZYING HEIGHT."

Her Mind Saw Another Room.

The alienist, to extend the scope of the experiment, directed the girl—or her subliminal mind—to proceed upstairs, enter a certain room (his daughter's bedroom), and describe what she saw there.

After an interval the girl announced that she was in a bedroom, and described in detail the physical characteristics of the doctor's daughter, a little girl of eight years.

Asked to count the number of chairs in the room, she announced that there were nine—two more than the number usually kept there.

Thus far the results might have been due merely to the ability of this girl to read the doctor's mind and to describe what he well knew. But on being asked what was on the mantel, the girl replied, "A picture of a horse."

Now, the doctor was certain that there was no picture of a horse in his daughter's room. So, leaving the subject lying on the couch, the experimenters proceeded to the little girl's room.

The mantel contained only the usual school-girl trifles.

"Just a clever mind-reader, after all," said the doctor. "She can't externalize her seeing faculties. She sees only what you and I have in our minds."

"Hold on," said the doctor's friend, stepping over to the mantel and picking up the photograph of a horse that was lying flat on the shelf. "What's this?"

It was a snap-shot of one of the doctor's horses, taken in the country by his little girl.

To explain these things is more difficult than to describe them. It is generally believed, however, that sleep-walking is only a form of auto-hypnosis. Somnambulism is generally confined to children, or to the youthful—in other words, to those happy people who still preserve illusions. Frequently, however, it accompanies a neurotic disposition; or it may result from great mental agitation. Lady Macbeth furnishes a classic example of this.

A FORECAST

by Vernie E. Connelly

Illustrated by E. F. SHERIE.

I.

SHE had asked for these last few moments alone. She stood before the mirror, with her bridal robes billowing about her. She gazed appraisingly upon her own loveliness, and a smile of satisfaction wreathed her lips.

Suddenly there appeared beside her a shadowy form, which said :—

" I am an omen from the future. I have come to bring you a warning.

" This day you are about to marry a poor man. Do you know that you are comdemning yourself to a life of toil—a life from which carefree happiness and unalloyed pleasures are eliminated ?

" You are planting the seeds from which will spring the weeds of your love. When youth calls you to the haunts of pleasure, you cannot answer that call—you will have to sweep floors. If genius wells up in your soul and cries out for expression, you will have to stifle its cry and wash dishes. Your youth and your beauty, your hope and enthusiasm, will give way under the strain of hopes deferred and wishes ungratified. You will become a querulous, complaining woman, unlovely and unenvied. In your soul will be bitterness, and your spiritual nature will expire in the ashes of disappointment. The beauties of life will call to you, and you will not have eyes to see. Love will mock at you as he goes by on the arm of youth, and in your anguish you will cry out :—

" ' There is no such thing as love. It is a phantom that vanishes at the first harsh word, the first sting of poverty ! '

" In the man whom you love so dearly to-day you will by and by discover all the faults to which mankind is heir. You will cry out that you have been cheated, and the walls of the place you call home will give back the echo. You will find yourself standing in the deep sea of life with not a sail in sight, with not a soul to throw you a life-line. You will then have to bide your time and wait until the tide of life washes you upon the shore of eternity. Are you willing to pay the price ? Beware ! "

II.

HE had asked for these last few moments alone.

He walked nervously about the room. He paused by the mantel and fondled his old black pipe. What wonderful dreams had floated heavenward in the smoke from its well-seasoned bowl ! Surely those dreams were about to come true. But before him stood a vision. The vision began to speak :—

" I am an omen from the future. I have come to bring you a warning.

" You are a poor man, yet to-day you are about to marry a woman who is noted for her beauty, for her social cleverness. What does she know of home-making when the pounds are few and the pennies must be counted ?

" Do you know that the results of your days of concentration and hard work will disappear like magic under the demands of family life ?

"The day will soon come when you will realize that in being married you have placed a heavy mortgage upon your future, and that your chances of redeeming that mortgage with the gold of success are small indeed

"You are taking a step that will not only increase your responsibility, but curtail your personal liberty as well. In your new contract you will no longer be able to consider yourself first. The pleasures of your bachelor days will appeal to you as strongly as they do now, but they will be too dear when bought with your wife's tears and reproaches.

"You will curse yourself because you cannot give her the material things she craves, and to which you think her beauty entitles her. You will exert all the strength of your manhood to lay worldly gifts at her feet. In doing this you will have no time to court Cupid's tender graces; and, after a few years, starved of the food of love's expression, he will fold his wings and silently depart, leaving your home bare of his gracious presence. Shorn of love's sweet ministrations, your home will be an empty shell. The gates of sentiment within your heart will close up, and you will be left stranded upon the island of disappointed hopes. Are you willing to pay the price? Beware!"

III.

He had begged for a moment with his wife-to-be before the final vows were taken. She came to him in all her bridal beauty, with an aura of love and wonder hovering o'er her. One look into each other's eyes, one fond embrace, and Cupid folded his gentle arms about them and whispered sweet hopes in their ears.

"In marriage," said the little god, "you are about to fulfil a divine command. You are obeying the laws of Nature. I have placed upon your heads the crown of love, and this has made you rich indeed. Without it you might have millions and yet be poorer than any beggar who walks the streets.

"Throughout your lives let mine be the guiding hand, and I will lead you into pastures sweet. I will guide you down the path of life which runs beside the stream of hope, on whose banks grow the promises of all things good, and in whose sparkling waters you may drink the fulfilment of your destiny.

"To live life to the fullest, you must keep me always as the guardian angel of your fireside. The hostile spirits of envy, jealousy, and hate can never cross your threshold while I tend the fires of your love. I will turn the trials of your everyday life into fuel for your spiritual natures, and they will grow large and reach out to help others.

"I will open the door to the sacred chapel of parenthood, where budding youth will inspire you to new ambitions, and joy and laughter will keep warm the corners of your hearts.

"If you heed me, you will pluck all the roses of life, sip all the sweets of nature, and reach the end of the road content indeed."

And they were married.

Another Prize for a Sense of Humour.

£150 IN PRIZES.

First Prize £100. **Five other Prizes**
Second Prize £25. **of £5 each.**

Here is another Humour Competition. If you wish to compete, make a numbered list of the following ten caricatures in what you consider their order of merit. A list of the pictures, in their order of popularity as indicated by the voting, will be made out, and the readers whose lists approach it most nearly will obtain the prizes. In the event of ties, any prize may be divided at the Editor's discretion. Competitors may send in more than one list, but each must be accompanied by the coupon on page 64 of the advertisement section, and should be posted on or before October 14th, addressed to THE STRAND MAGAZINE Offices, 8-11, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and marked "Sense of Humour Competition."

1.

I. ZANGWILL.
By Stone.

2.

PADEREWSKI.
By Max Beerbohm.

3.

TOLSTOY.
By Olaf Gulbransson.

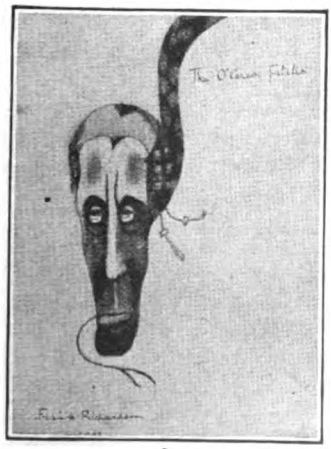
4.
A. J. BALFOUR.
By Tom Titt.
(By permission of the "Daily Chronicle.")

5.
SARAH BERNHARDT.
By Ernest Forbes.

6.
SIR HENRY IRVING.
By Alick P. F. Ritchie.

7.
MELBOURNE INMAN.
By Tom Webster.

8.
GEORGE GRAVES.
By H. M. Bateman.



9.
SIR EDWARD CARSON.
By Frank Richardson.

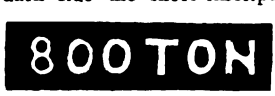
10.
W. REDMOND.
By E. T. Reed.

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

475.—WHAT NATIONALITY?

I WAS looking at a ship lying in dock, and noticed that there had been painted in white letters on her dark side the short inscription here shown, which



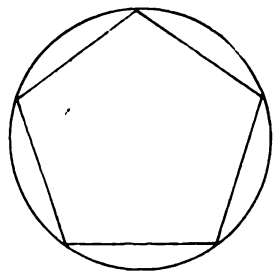
appeared to indicate that she was an eight-hundred-ton ship. I was wondering to what country she belonged, as the paint was wet, and might well have been applied recently on a foreign ship while lying in our port, when I saw that a few strokes with a brush dipped in black paint would indicate a nationality, and, by a queer coincidence, this turned out to be the correct one. Can you, with a few strokes of the pen, show what that nationality was?

476.—EASY DIVISION.

IF I want to divide the number 8101265822784 by 8, all I have to do is to transfer the 8 from the beginning to the end of the number. Can you find a number beginning with 7 that can be divided by 7 in the same simple way—by merely transferring the 7 from the beginning to the end? This is a little puzzle to try the wits of the young arithmetician, for it is the easiest thing in the world to do if you give it a few moments' thought.

477.—MAKING A PENTAGON.

I SUPPOSE the vast majority of people, if they want to make a regular pentagon, will draw a circle, and then make a succession of trials with the compasses until they get it exact, as in the diagram. This is a rough-and-ready method that does not appeal to the geometrician, and I have shown in my book, "Amusements in Mathematics," how it may be done easily without any such empirical trials. But the present problem is quite different, and the solution should be known by everybody, as it is quite easy to do and to remember, when you have once seen it. How are we to draw a regular pentagon with sides of a given length? If a lady asked you to draw her a pentagon for a pin-cushion, with sides exactly three inches in length, how would you proceed?



478.—MISSING WORDS.

A CORRESPONDENT (Mrs. R.-B.) sends me the following pretty original puzzle, to which she gives the title, "Proserpine in Her Garden." Each of the six missing words contains the same six letters:—

Gay . . . . . stirred by every wind that blows
Bedeck her path. In . . . . . hues
And cunning . . . . . her broidered raiment flows.
On ample . . . . . rich fruits behold—with dews
Empearled o'er—her . . . . . food, I trow.
Fair maid, thou hid'st too much: reveal it now!

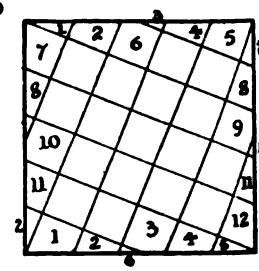
479.—A PUZZLE FOR ACCOUNTANTS.

WHEN cash-book entries are called out to the ledger-keeper to be posted, a common error is one like this: £38.4.0 being posted £30.8.4, thus causing a balancing error of £7.15.8. When one clerk both views the cash-book entry and posts in ledger, a common error is to post the cash-book figures correctly in their order, but in different columns, as £3.8.0 posted as 3s. 8d., thus causing an error of £3.4.4. If the debits are proved, and if there is but one mistake of a sum of pounds, shillings, and pence in the posting, causing an error in the balance of £189.10.0 by short posting, occurring in one of the two ways stated, what amount should I look for in the cash-book to locate the error?

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

471.—TESSELLATED PAVEMENTS.

THE illustration shows how the square space may be covered with twenty-nine square tiles by laying down seventeen whole and cutting each of the remaining twelve tiles in two parts. Two parts having a similar number form a whole tile.



472.—HALLAM'S ENIGMA.

I AM still without any solution to this "unsolved enigma."

473.—MATE IN THREE.

THE key move is 1. R to K 3. If Black plays 1. K to R 7, then 2. K to B 2, and mate next move. If Black plays 1. K to R 8, then 2. K to Kt 3, etc. Of course, if Black goes to B 8 on his first move, White mates next move.

474.—THE TWO FOURS.

THIS is how 64 may be expressed by the use of only two fours with arithmetical signs:—

$$\sqrt{\left(\sqrt{4}\right)^{\sqrt{4}} - \sqrt{\left(\sqrt{2}\right)^{24}}} = \sqrt{2^{12}} = \sqrt{4096} = 64$$

The process of simplification shown should make everything quite clear.

H.G.WELLS AS HISTORIAN

A REMARKABLE INTERVIEW

VERY POPULAR EVERYWHERE

FRY'S Pure Breakfast COCOA

See Page 22.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

9 FIRST RATE STORIES

November, 1919.

— A —
GOOD TURN
When you have read this copy pass it on to a friend.

C 8 1919

No. 347
VOL 58

1/- net.

Extract from Mr. Jolliboy's Diary No. 18.

"A plague upon these scheming widows! This noon upon my morning walk, whilst resting on a bench, that cunning jade the Widow Vane did overtake me. 'Lud, Mr. Jolliboy' cried she bridling and simpering 'how young you keep. They say you're in love with your pipe but pray do you never think to take an agreeable woman to wife?'. 'Madam,' said I, rising and bowing, 'since I am wedded to my pipe I can have no other bride but Chairman.' "

Chairman, is a fine tobacco, made in three strengths; "**Boardman's**," mild; "**Chairman**," medium; "**Recorder**," full; and is sold by tobacconists everywhere at 1/- per oz.

R. J. LEA, LTD. MANCHESTER.

"HE WAS GETTING ALL HIS NERVE BACK, AND SCARCELY DOUBTING THAT HE WOULD SUCCEED IN RETRIEVING THE LETTER, WHEN HIS LEFT FOOT SLID OUTWARD ON THE FROST-COVERED LEDGE."

(*See page* 407.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Vol. 58. NOVEMBER, 1919. No. 347.

The MAMMOTH of the STEEP

by L. J. Beeston

Illustrated by A. Gilbert, R.O.I.

"IF you are going to preach communication with beneficent presences—you gentlemen who are spiritualists," said Dr. Purfee, a slightly-mocking humour glinting behind his horn-rimmed spectacles, "then you must in fairness admit the other sort—the maleficent. You have asked my opinion. I never offer one in these matters. Ghosts, and ghost stories? *Enfantillage;* poor stuff. What I *should* like to tell you——"

He pulled himself up and looked at the late hour on the clock.

The doctor's five guests, who were spending the week-end at his country place, fixed expectant eyes upon him. He continued to stare at the time, but his regard had become abstract and pondering.

"Only good nerves here," ventured someone, laconically.

"Ten minutes after midnight, which I suppose is the correct hour for my story," continued Dr. Purfee. "You insist? Then the result be on your own heads.

"In one of the very topmost offices of that sky-scraping edifice called the Connomore Building, Morton Baltry sat alone, long after nightfall, when every other business tenant had left the offices, and the janitor, after sweeping down the stone stairway, had retired to his nest in the bottom of that precipice of concrete and steel.

"Baltry had been staying late for a fortnight, and would stay late for a fortnight more, pressed by business. He had sent home his two clerks and his stenographer.

"He had just received the last delivery of letters. He had opened two of them, but the third remained in his grasp, the covering envelope unbroken. He regarded the writing on this envelope—his own name and business address—as if he saw the letters writhe and twist, or as if they had turned to characters in white fire which scorched his eyeballs.

"The handwriting was that of a man named William Kentish. This man had done Baltry a frightful wrong, of which my story calls for no mention. Baltry had followed him over the world with a single desire: a full measure of deadly revenge. Shadowed, pursued, dogged, Kentish had lived in a nightmare of dread. Finally—but I am coming to that. Abrupt, swift death had swept Kentish into the dark, and that was all the world knew about it.

"That happened five days before Baltry received the letter. He received it on the evening of the day when the earth had

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closed over his enemy! More, the postmark showed that it had been dispatched only a few hours back.

"What of that? A very simple explanation suggested itself. Of course, Kentish, towards the end, had asked some friend to send the note on such-and-such a day after his eternal departure. So the recipient argued—and very rationally. Nevertheless, Baltry, the long-fanned flame of a murderous revenge now extinct in his heart, experienced a queer uneasiness; and with clammy fingers he turned the envelope over and over. *What was he going to find inside?*

"Suddenly he took this weakness by the throat and strangled it. A thrust with a paper-knife and the envelope gaped. He jerked out the communication. Yes, it was from Kentish; written on a sheet of good note-paper bearing the address printed from a die. Baltry started to read as follows:—

"'Now that it is all over, what are your sensations? You swore to kill me, and I feel that nothing will turn you from your purpose. And nothing did. You have murdered me—you, Baltry. You have dealt the blow at last. You have pushed me over the edge. You have taken your fill of revenge. Are you satisfied? For three years and more you have hounded me about, and in vain I endeavoured to elude you. Finally I gave up seeking to do so. It was not worth while. Life had no sweetness under such conditions. Perhaps I did not value my life as much as you thirsted for it. Anyhow, you have snatched it from me.'

"When Morton Baltry had got as far as that, he stopped, too deeply moved to continue. Except for that sentence: 'I feel that nothing will turn you from your purpose,' the letter read as if written after the end of the writer. But that, of course, was preposterous. Kentish had put down that bizarre epistle in an hour of neurotic emotionalism. Indeed, he had explained something of his state of mind in writing of how he had been driven—hounded—from place to place for three years, so that he found his life a torture, an unendurable strain. Doubtless his nerve had sagged under it; hence his wild idea of penning a letter to the man who meant to kill him: a letter to be delivered after the blow had fallen.

"When Baltry had sufficiently urged this reasoning upon himself, he continued his reading—as follows:—

"'I wonder how you did it? I wonder what method you employed? Of course, you have made yourself perfectly secure. At least, you think you have made yourself secure. You could have killed me long, long ago if you had not chosen to wait until all risk to yourself was eliminated. You are not one of those men who care not what happens to themselves so long as they have vengeance first. You are not prepared to pay for your act with years of punishment, of degradation. You are not such a fool. So I repeat—I wonder how you did it?

"'Perhaps I know—now. Yes, probably it is all perfectly clear to me by this time. Have you considered the possibility of my looking at you as you read? Lift your eyes! See if I am staring at you, Baltry, out of the empty air!'

"As the stilled hand bade him, so involuntarily Baltry obeyed. But he saw only the green distempered wall of his office, and a row of leather-bound ledgers on a shelf. A derisive smile played round his lips. He realized that he who was sped was trying to frighten him; that a dead man was trying to make faces at him in the dark.

"Baltry pulled open a drawer in his desk where he kept a box of cigars, and he forced himself to light one—slowly. Leaning back in his revolving chair he took up the letter again and continued:—

"'Did you see me when you looked just now? If you failed, it does not follow that I was not there.

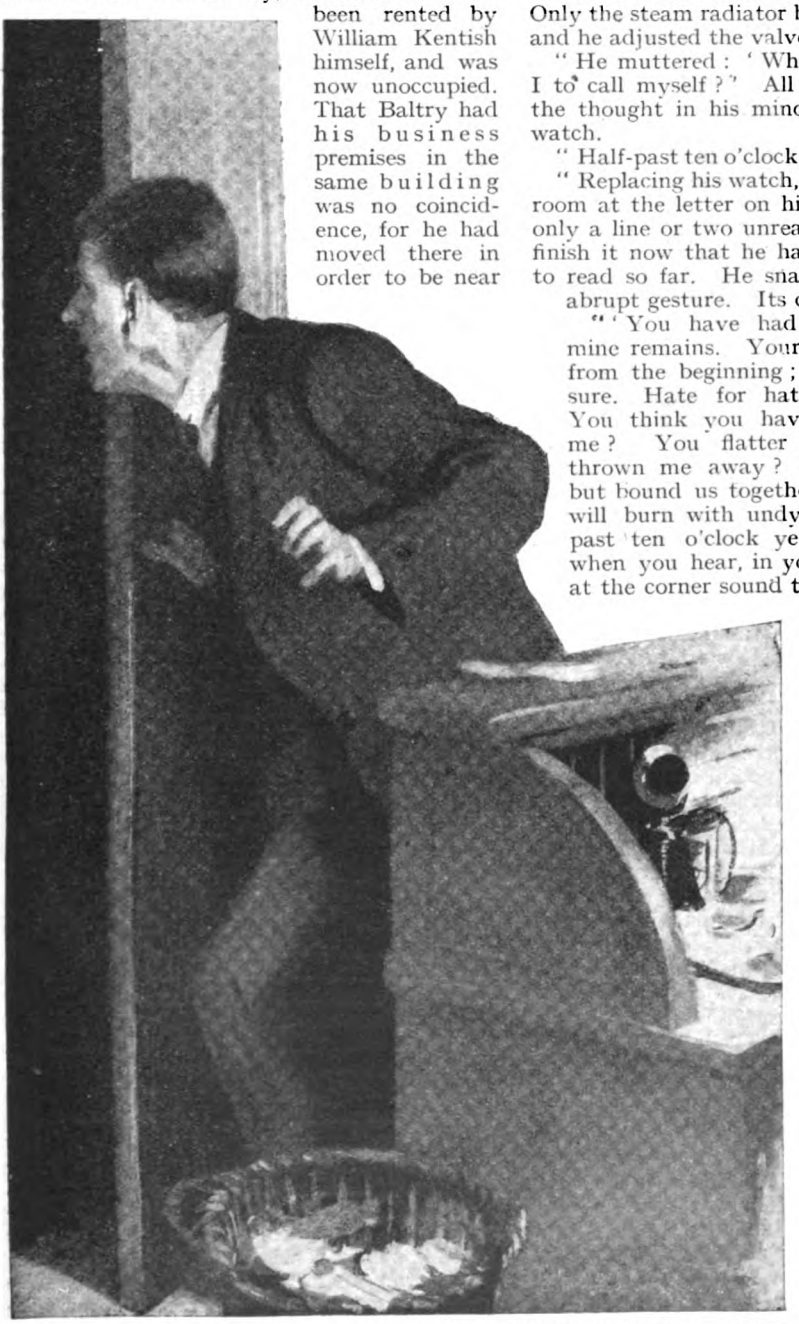
"'You are sure of yourself, are you? Having sunk me, you are persuaded that you are perfectly secure from discovery? You think that you have ruled out every chance, every clue? You are wrong. You made one mistake, and it is going to damn you. There is one clue which you have not covered; one slip that is going to be fatal to you. And even as you read these words your own hour is about to strike. You will receive this letter when you are in your office. You will be alone, and at nightfall. Look at your watch, Baltry. Is it half-past ten o'clock yet? The minutes between now and then are yours, and not one more beyond!'

"At that juncture Morton Baltry started from his chair and gripped the paper with intent to tear it across and across. He paused, however. Then, changing his method of destruction, he struck a match and approached the tiny flare to the edge of the sheet. Again, at the final instant, he desisted. He tossed away his cigar, stepped to the window and flung it wide open, inhaling a deep breath of cool air.

"Outside was the vast, lonely night. Far above the roof-tops of opposite warehouses climbed the Connomore Building, making a concave of the wintry sky, in which burned the lamps of the stars. At the bottom of the abyss was the business thoroughfare, practically lifeless at that hour, where the occasional concentrated gleam of a motor-car's headlight glimmered like a glow-worm's candle, and the sound of its engine came up like a sigh.

"Baltry put his heated face out from the

window and peered into the void. A nipping wind shrilled by, uninterrupted at that altitude. Almost unconsciously the watcher leaned farther out and looked to see if a light was streaming from the window of that office which was next to his own. But of course there was no ray, for that office had been rented by William Kentish himself, and was now unoccupied. That Baltry had his business premises in the same building was no coincidence, for he had moved there in order to be near to his enemy—in accord with his sustained hounding-down scheme.



"BALTRY, TURNED TO STONE, LISTENED WITH PAINFUL INTENTNESS. THEN HE PUSHED BACK HIS CHAIR, STEPPED TO THE DOOR, AND FLUNG IT OPEN."

"Suddenly Baltry drew back his head and shoulders and spun round as if menaced by a serpent's rattle. But nothing had changed in the room, and his mood had created whatever it was that he had seemed to hear. Only the steam radiator bubbled and gurgled, and he adjusted the valve.

"He muttered: 'What sort of a fool am I to call myself?' All the same, pursuing the thought in his mind, he pulled out his watch.

"Half-past ten o'clock, less twelve minutes.

"Replacing his watch, he looked across the room at the letter on his desk. There was only a line or two unread. Well, he might finish it now that he had permitted himself to read so far. He snatched it up with an abrupt gesture. Its conclusion ran:—

"'You have had your revenge, but mine remains. Yours was almost certain from the beginning; mine is absolutely sure. Hate for hate, and fear for fear. You think you have rid the earth of me? You flatter yourself you have thrown me away? Wrong! You have but bound us together with a chain that will burn with undying fire. Is it half-past ten o'clock yet, Baltry? Listen, when you hear, in your office, the church at the corner sound the half-hour. Listen—and you may hear me laugh at your side!'

"Baltry threw the letter down, then, as if it had hurt him physically. He was very pale, and beads of sweat glistened on his forehead. Fool that he was to have read the thing at all! It was to be hoped that whoever had dropped the letter in the post, in accord, doubtless, with the wish of the writer, had not indulged a curiosity by a secret reading. Baltry examined the flap of the envelope, but decided that it had not been tampered with.

"He kept glancing at the time, though he called himself a fool on each occasion. He

muttered: 'The idea is staringly obvious. It is cheap, melodramatic clap-trap. It is so to work on my feelings, so to terrorize conscience, that, when the time expires, I shall collapse through sheer funk.'

"Baltry urged this explanation upon himself. All the same, he put his watch on the desk in front of his eyes. The creeping hand approached the half-hour. Two minutes—one——

"The sonorous chime of the big church clock drifted past the window lonelily.

"It had not died away before Baltry gripped the arms of his chair, and the blood sank from his cheeks as if death had touched them!

"What was that he had heard? For he was sure that he had heard something outside his door? Was it a laugh? It sounded like a sardonic chuckle, a subdued expression of some grim enjoyment.

"Baltry, turned to stone, listened with painful intentness, holding his breath. But he heard nothing more at all, except the ticking of his watch marking off the dead seconds. He began to persuade himself that his nerves had let him down; that he had allowed a heated fancy to fashion that sound. Was not that just what the writer had intended to do? So he pushed back his chair, stepped to the door, and flung it open.

"For an instant his heart leaped, as if he expected to see someone rush in, or a torch-like glare of eyes in the blackness. But there was no interruption of his solitude, and a deep silence soothed his nervousness. He went out boldly, straining his sight in all directions. No one, no thing, was there. He saw, dimly, the shut doors of the other offices, the mosaic floor and climbing stairs, the abysmal shaft of the elevator, which emitted a cold breath as if from some immense throat—the windpipe of this stone behemoth.

"Baltry shrugged his shoulders, almost himself again as he re-entered his room. Clearly a slightly enfevered imagination had played a trick with him. So far the dead man was succeeding in his grim jest, as he had planned. But he should succeed no farther!

"But at that instant Baltry received another shock; for as his thought pulled his gaze towards the letter, he saw that it was no longer there!

"He had left it upon his desk. He was absolutely sure of that. And he was just as certain that no one had slipped in between him and the door. For a second he was dazed; then he realized—or thought that he did—what must have occurred: an entering current of air from the window, which he had not closed, had blown the letter to the floor.

"But—no, that hadn't occurred. Baltry searched every inch of it, looked behind each chair, under the desk, behind the steam radiator, behind the row of ledgers. The letter was surely gone.

"And at that his nervousness came back again in a deeper wave, and he felt his forehead become damp under a creeping fear. This fresh mystery appeared to lack any possible explanation.

"No! There was one solution he had not thought of. His leaving the door wide open had set up a draught right through the office, and it had possibly wafted the letter out of the window. Baltry decided that his surmise must be correct; but in that case he had lost the letter. It had floated down, had glided to a considerable distance. Supposing someone picked it up? With a sinking of the heart he felt that that would be a nasty thing to occur; it would be an infernally awkward thing to happen. And beyond doubt someone *would* find it, come the morning.

"More than irritated by this apprehension, Baltry put his head out of the window as if he actually hoped to see that accursed letter floating in space. And see it he did!

"It was resting on a stone platform below his window.

"This platform was a fairly broad ledge which cut right across the façade of the Connomore Building, and just below its topmost storey—to which, indeed, it gave the appearance of being an additional storey built after completion of the fabric. It was really, however, purely ornamental, and in the nature of a cornice, supported by stone brackets.

"The letter had floated down and been arrested by this ledge. The wind had drifted it from a vertical flight, so that it had come to a stop a few yards to the right of Baltry's window, and precisely underneath that of the late tenant—William Kentish.

"With wide-dilated eyes Baltry stared down at the little sheet of paper. A thought stabbed him—'Queer that the infernal thing should have stopped *there!*' But he told himself, and correctly, that only the wind was responsible. More, the wind would not let it stay there indefinitely. Baltry fancied he saw it flutter. At any moment it might be blown off, and then—good-bye to any hope of getting it.

"But could he get it now? Certainly he might. To lower himself from his window-sill upon the ledge below was no hard feat. And with ease he could step along the platform as far as the letter, for the ledge afforded plenty of width.

"On the other hand, he must pull off the little performance at the summit of a brain-bewildering precipice, in the whistle of the night wind. How would his head behave if

he found himself out there, poised on the lip of that frightful gulf ?

" Yet go he must if he wanted the letter, and waste no time about it, either. He lost a minute in deciding, finally, whether the recovery of the note was worth the risk, and he came to the conclusion that it was. His name and address, as well as that of William Kentish, were there for anyone to read. Undoubtedly it was the very last sort of communication to be abandoned to any chance finder. It might mean endless blackmail.

" Summoning up all his powers of self-command, Baltry started to climb out from his window. Gripping the sill with his large and powerful hands, he lowered himself until he stood upon the ledge beneath it. His face, of course, was turned to the building. Still holding with his hands, he experienced reluctance in letting go, in releasing his fierce clench of the stone. But slowly he relaxed his hold, and slowly turned himself leftwards.

" Instantly sense of his awful loneliness touched his consciousness like a faint puff of an anæsthetic. He had expected it, however, and his will fought off that deadly suggestion of vertigo. He moved forward, and was getting all his nerve back, and scarcely doubting that he would succeed in his object, when his left foot slid outward on the frost-covered ledge, and Baltry dropped forward as if shot. His left leg actually swung clear of the platform, and his chin came down with a violent blow upon his bent right knee. For an instant Baltry believed himself lost, and his blanched lips uttered a terrible cry. But he recovered his balance, drawing back his left leg, and kneeling upon the stone, his face held downwards, and a trickle of salt sweat running into his eyes.

" He clung there for some minutes, paralyzed, trying to bury his broken nails into the stone, wholly lacking mental force enough to raise himself to a standing posture, a fly on the face of this mammoth of the steep. Faint and unreal the far-away sounds of human life and movement crept to his ears. He tried to receive them, to understand them, to convince himself that so far he was safe enough ; and presently his benumbed nerves began to relax their tension.

" He even thought that he might dare to go on, only this time he would advance by crawling—as he should have done in the first place. Ever so slowly he edged his body forward. And at last Baltry reached his goal. Yes, it was the letter, as he had believed, and he possessed himself of it.

" But directly his purpose was achieved, a wave of faintness came with the reaction. The trial of his nerves had been too severe. He felt himself unable to return ; he felt that if he attempted to turn round, consciousness would go out like a candle, or else he would throw himself into the void, into the pit of night on whose bosom he was hanging. He looked up with his anguished eyeballs, and he saw the glistening window of the room next to his own, which his dead enemy had tenanted. Easier for him to draw himself in there than to go back to his own. True, the door was locked inside, but Baltry did not give that detail a thought.

" He drew a deep breath ; he called upon himself for a last effort ; he muttered—'Now !'

" Ten seconds later he was inside the empty office, leaning against one of the bare walls, his chest heaving like that of a sleeper whom horror presses by the throat.

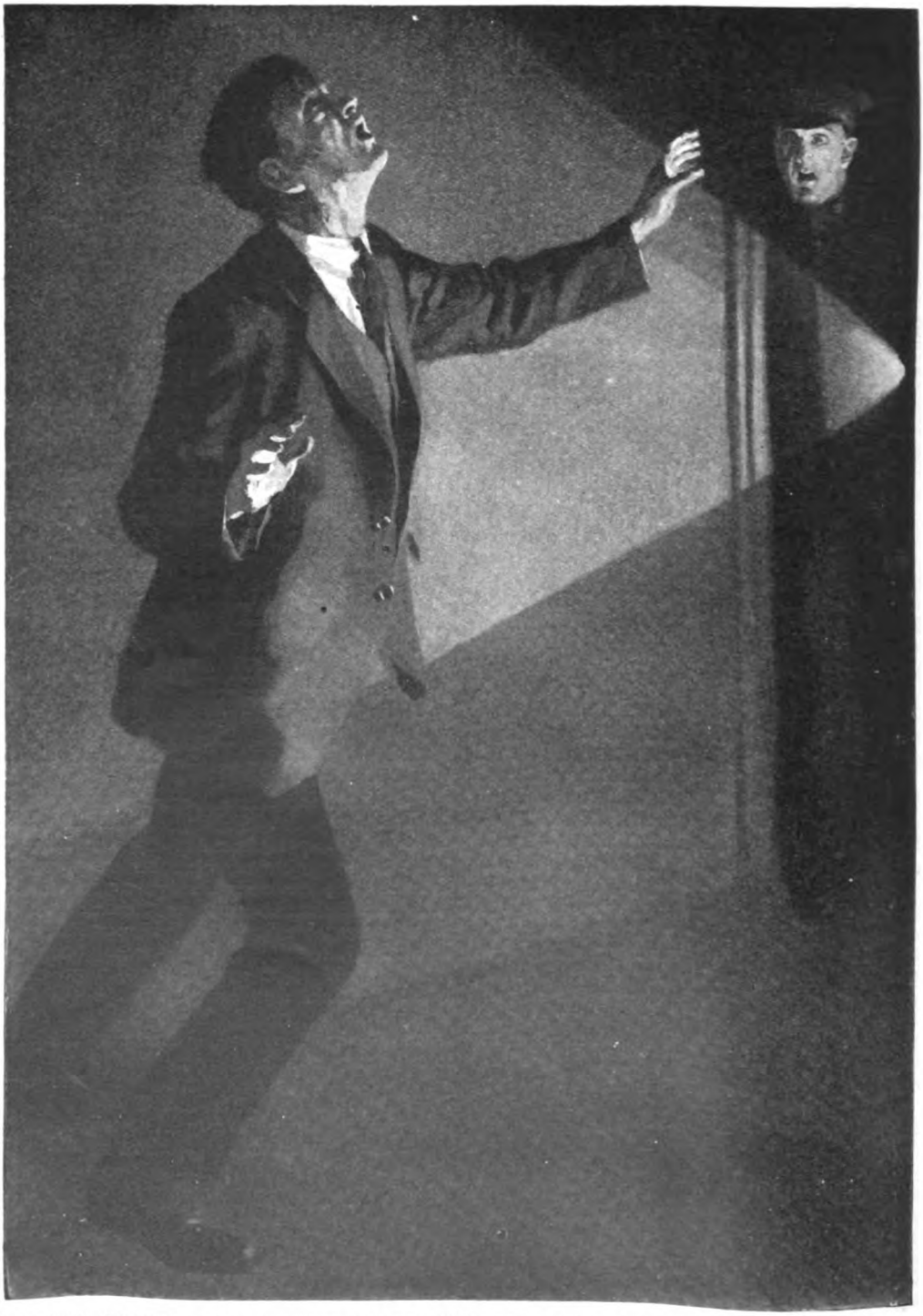
" When he had partially recovered, his first act was to tear into minute fragments the cause of his distress of mind. Having destroyed Kentish's letter, the awkwardness of his present situation began to obtrude itself. Any unoccupied office in the building was kept locked, the janitor having the key. Baltry had no means of egress, no method of making himself heard. The telephone had been removed with the office furniture. He had to confront the fact of his spending the night there.

" He did not relish this idea. He would be waited for at his home. How was he to pass the long hours on these bare boards where there was not even a chair to sit upon ? And in this room—of all the many rooms in the Connomore !

" It was then that a queer, vague apprehension came into Baltry's mind, hovered there like the pale flame of the marsh fire : was he the victim of some infernal power, the dupe of some maleficent presence, which had from the first been luring him onwards ? At the precise minute insisted upon in the letter he had fancied that he had heard a sound, which had caused him to go out, which had brought about the floating of the letter through the window, which had sent him well-nigh to a terrible death, which had finally brought him—here !

" No sooner had this bizarre idea presented itself than he heard the handle of the door rattle as if someone had touched it !

" Baltry spun round, putting up a hand against the wall to prevent himself from falling, for he was now on the edge of a complete collapse. He glared at the door handle as if it was a mocking visage leering at him ; and he saw that it was very slowly being turned. Baltry groped backwards, still clinging to the wall, until an angle stopped him. He saw the door open without a sound, ever so slowly, an inch—two inches ——! And then he saw a bloodless face that



"HE SAW THE DOOR OPEN WITHOUT A SOUND, EVER SO SLOWLY. AND THEN HE SAW A BLOODLESS FACE THAT SEEMED TO BE HANGING IN THE BLACK APERTURE!"

seemed to be hanging in the black aperture!

"Baltry uttered a sound which was more a sob than a cry, and pitched forward in a deep swoon."

Dr. Purfee paused in his narration. He looked round at his five guests, who had scarcely moved while he was speaking. One of the most emotional burst out:—

"And it was William Kentish, murdered and disembodied, whom Baltry saw?"

"By no means," answered Dr. Purfee, dryly. "It was merely the janitor, slightly scared. He had been returning from an errand, and by the light shining from Baltry's window had seen a human figure on the ledge, which figure had seemed to enter the unoccupied office. Or, rather, the janitor had an impression of seeing it, for the light was not sufficiently good for him to be sure."

"But where did you get your facts, doctor?" asked another.

"I heard the entire story from Morton Baltry himself. I attended him during the severe illness which followed his sensational experience."

"What! He made a confession to you of killing——"

"Ah, but Baltry did not kill Kentish," interrupted Dr. Purfee, with a smile. "True, he had indulged certain thoughts that way, for he admitted them to me. True, he had hounded his enemy from place to place; and Kentish's belief that the other meant to murder him was not to be wondered at. But Kentish died from perfectly natural causes. After the death of his enemy, Baltry experienced certain twinges of remorse; and his receiving of that terrible letter came as a severe nervous shock, throwing into a fierce and lurid light his own inveterate hatred of the man who had wronged him, and the night of terror in which that man had lived. What anguish he had caused his intended victim! I think that if any one of us got a letter like that, in such conditions, at such an hour, he would feel perturbed—to put it very mildly."

"Doubtless," cut in another. "And it served Baltry right. My opinion is that he was not deluded in his fear that Kentish, adrift in the dark, was playing with him that night."

"That is going too far," objected another auditor. "You forget that Kentish was not really murdered."

"True. But when we remember what he suffered——"

"Let us remember that it is an hour past midnight," interrupted Dr. Purfee, rising, "and curb those wild horses—our imaginations. Besides, Baltry got perfectly well and hearty. I met him at Margate, this summer, romping with his five bouncing kids. Good night to you, gentlemen—and pleasant dreams!"

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

In the next number will appear the first of

A SERIES OF ARTICLES ON THE SPIRIT WORLD

by

A. CONAN DOYLE

under the heading of

"The Uncharted Coast."

The first of these, which is entitled

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The Future of Magic

by David Devant

Illustrated by Arthur Ferrier

HAVE often been asked—by people who are interested in conjuring—what I consider will be the future of magic. Usually, before I have had time to think of an answer to this question, the questioner has said something like this :—

"With all the wonders of modern science—airships, aeroplanes, wireless telegraphy, wireless telephony—how is the magician going to continue to earn a living ?"

As a rule my friends have not put it quite so brutally as that, but I have been sure that that idea has been in their minds. Science has so many modern miracles to show us—and most of them for our own benefit—that the poor magician, with his little stock-in-trade of tricks and illusions, is soon to become a back number in a world of real marvels. I know that many people take that view of magic.

I do not. One has only to look at the history of magic to see that tricks which are thousands of years old are just as mysterious to a twentieth-century audience as they were when they were first invented. During those thousands of years the world has advanced, and probably the methods by which some of the old tricks are done have been greatly improved, but the tricks remain the same, and I do not doubt that in the course of the next thousand years they will still hold their own.

It always seems to me that people who imagine that magic will die a natural death because, say, we shall soon be telephoning to each other without wires, take an entirely wrong view of magic.

The magician—the real magician—plays the part of a miracle-worker. When he performs he apparently achieves the impossible, and the methods by which he produces this effect on the minds of his audience are usually his own.

The wireless operator—I use him merely as an example—works in quite a different way. He makes use of one of the latest discoveries of science, but the facts concerning that discovery are common property, and when the operator is at work he has no secrets to hide, no wonderful effect to produce. I have been told that an efficient operator soon forgets to give a thought to the wonderful side of his work.

Now go back to the magician for a moment. To make my meaning clear, let us consider one of the most famous of all card tricks—I will not mention its name, but its wonder-producing quality depends partly on the fact that the conjurer apparently does not touch the cards himself from the time when the trick actually begins to the time when it is finished.

Over and over again I have known members of an audience to tell each other, after that trick has been done well : "But the conjurer never touched the cards !"

Now, to let you into a secret regarding that trick, I may tell you that the conjurer did touch the cards, but by his ability as an actor playing the part of a miracle-worker, by his skill in working on the minds of his audience by suggestion, he convinced his audience that he never touched the cards during the whole course of the trick.

A man who can produce that effect is a magician, and you will admit, I am sure, that the instruments he uses—his hands and his brains (this particular trick requires no apparatus)—are really far superior to the delicate instruments of the wireless operator, wonderful as they are. I imagine that any intelligent man, sitting down with a determination to master the subject of wireless telegraphy, could be sure of becoming an efficient operator, but I should not like to guarantee that any particular man, no matter how hard he worked at magic or what his degree of intelligence was, could be sure of becoming a magician. The magician really produces a fresh wonder every time he performs ; the

wireless operator—remember, I am using him all this time merely as an example—merely makes use of certain wonderful, delicate instruments, whose working is well known to everyone interested in the subject, and, in a less degree, to the public in general.

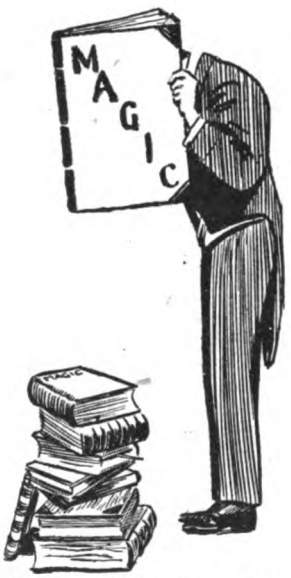
It may be argued, of course, that the magician's secrets are also well known, and that they can be studied, in books, by anyone interested in magic. Quite so. But there is one very peculiar quality about magical secrets: they are wonderfully elusive. Even magicians themselves forget the secrets of their craft and are continually having to refresh their memories by going through some of the standard works on magic.

As for the general public, they simply have no memories at all when magic is the subject to be remembered. Some of the most famous tricks and illusions that have ever been performed—tricks which form the basis of the magician's art—have been explained fully, with diagrams and photographs, in many books on magic and countless magazine articles. Are the public any the wiser? They are not. The public forget these things.

This view of magical literature is mine, and I know that it is not the view of some magicians, who are afraid that the publication of information regarding the secrets of magic will tend to do harm to magic generally by making it too cheap. These fears are ill-founded, and I will prove my point.

I have written two books on magic. In those books I have explained a number of tricks suitable for amateur conjurers, but without first running through my own books I should not like to have to pass an examination in them. No doubt I could tell you how any of the tricks described in my books could be done, but I am by no means sure that the explanation which would first occur to me would be the best method or the one which I myself have written in my own book. If I cannot remember all my own secrets easily I think I may be allowed to assert, without running the risk of being accused of conceit, that the general public are not likely to remember them.

To prove in another way my point that the public memory regarding magic is a very bad memory, I may remind you that conjuring tricks are sold in shops. Some of the tricks which are distributed broadcast over the country every Christmas-time are the best tricks and the oldest tricks in the world. One would think that every boy in the country would know them. Well, a drawing-room conjurer can afford to ignore the fact that some of the tricks which he performs are actually in the possession of his audience. I have proved that myself over and over again. Boys forget tricks as fast as they learn them.



"EVEN MAGICIANS ARE CONTINUALLY HAVING TO REFRESH THEIR MEMORIES BY GOING THROUGH SOME OF THE STANDARD WORKS ON MAGIC."

All this goes to show that magic is not merely a matter of learning and studying from a book. To be a magician one must have some quality which cannot be imparted or acquired, but anyone possessing that quality can improve upon it. I have had pupils who, I am convinced, would not become magicians if they discovered the secret of living for a thousand years and practised magic all the time. They have not been lacking in manual dexterity or in their enthusiasm for their hobby, but there has been a something wanting in their performances, even though I taught them by allowing them to copy every movement of my hands, my gestures, "patter"—everything.

Magic cannot be learned in the way that a scientific subject can be learned, and when we come to compare the wonders of modern science with the wonders which the modern magician endeavours to produce, we find that we are trying to compare two things which really have nothing in common.

Having said that I will now—apparently—contradict myself. I have not the slightest doubt that the wonders of modern science will tend to make the public a little more critical than they have been with regard to the work of magicians. Think of what a scientific man can do with radium; think of the X-ray treatment; think of some of the wonderful inventions used on sea and land in the war. Well, the magician's task is to break some natural law—that is to say, that is what he appears to do—and therefore he must not forget these latest discoveries of science, because his task is to appear to go one better than any of them. Mind you, he only appears to do this!

I think that however much science progresses, whatever the wonders it has in store for us, there will always be a section of the public who will be interested in the entertainment provided by a good magician. But magicians will have to bestir themselves. They will have to produce novelties or, at any rate, put new dresses on old tricks. This is especially true of magicians who appear at music-halls, because such magicians invariably have to face audiences which are not particularly interested in magic. It is the business of the magician to arouse their interest for the time being, and having aroused it to keep it wide awake with a succession of pleasant surprises. I think that magical effects and illusions of the future will, for this reason, be even more spectacular than those of the past, and that there will be a wider gulf

between the magic of the drawing-room performer and that of the stage magician.

What novelties are the magicians of the future to produce?

That is rather a tall question. No doubt many magicians are at this moment working on the production of novelties, and if we could peep into their private workshops I dare say we should find that some of them were trying to elaborate old tricks and illusions, eliminating the weak points and dressing up each magical effect in an entirely novel manner. I will take an example.

Many years ago a very popular trick was that of making a lady float in mid-air. The method employed by magicians of a past age to produce this effect would not now deceive any intelligent man, woman, or child. Within the memory of all of us the method of producing this illusion has been greatly improved. The lady floats in mid-air and a hoop is passed over her; it is obvious, therefore, that the lady cannot be raised by mechanical means from the stage, or from the top of the stage, or from the back of the stage.

How is a magician to elaborate that trick? He must make the lady move about in mid-air, and, personally, I shall not rest content with that illusion until I can make her float round the auditorium of a music-hall, with all the lights turned up.

I see no reason why it should not be done, and I believe I know how it could be done, but the necessary experiments would be costly both in time and money.

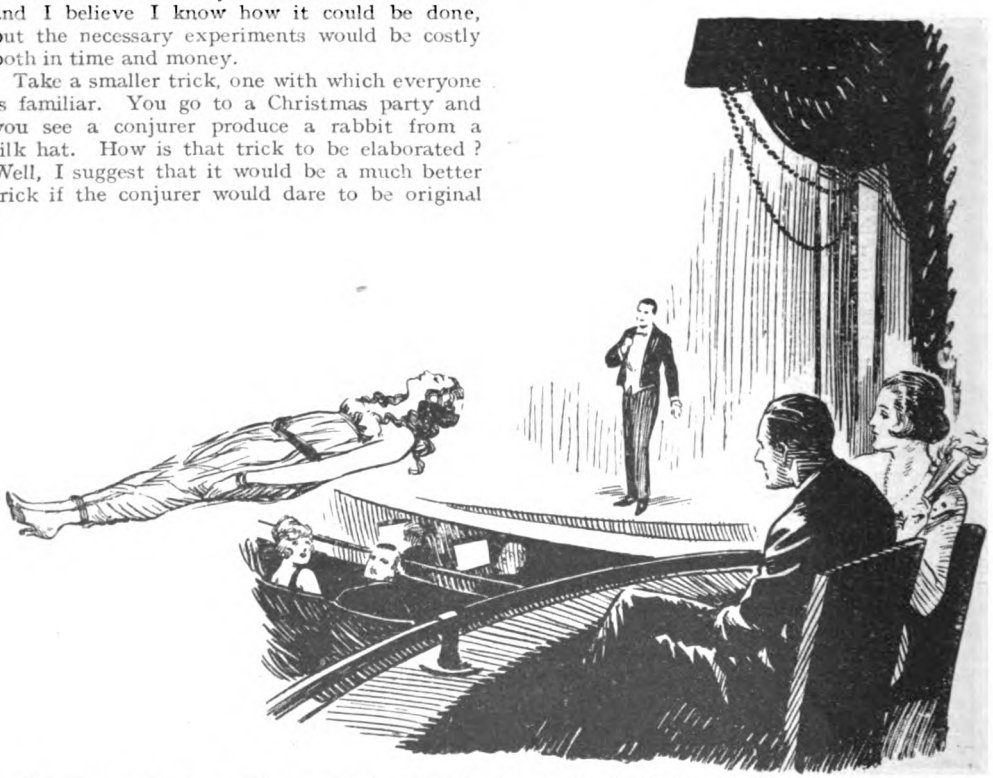
Take a smaller trick, one with which everyone is familiar. You go to a Christmas party and you see a conjurer produce a rabbit from a silk hat. How is that trick to be elaborated? Well, I suggest that it would be a much better trick if the conjurer would dare to be original and would dispense with the hat. Let him hold out his right arm with the palm of his hand upwards. In his left hand he holds a large silk muffler. He holds this muffler by the centre and allows it to cover his right hand for a moment. When he takes away the muffler there is the rabbit—sitting on the palm of his right hand.

Having done it once, why should he not increase the surprise and delight of his audience by doing it again and again? Some conjurers—myself among them—are content to produce billiard balls from nowhere. Each ball appears magically between the tips of the fingers. But to produce four rabbits from nowhere would be a much better trick.

Again I see no reason why it should not be done by a magician who will sit down and think, and work.

Take another trick—or, rather, series of tricks. I refer to all those card tricks which begin in the same way. The conjurer asks someone in the audience to take a card from the pack. But suppose that the conjurer began by asking someone to name a card, the card which was to be used in the trick. How much more wonderful some of our card tricks would be! Perhaps I am getting too technical, but conjurers will appreciate my point.

Let us—in imagination—elaborate some other tricks for the future. In one of my own tricks



"I SHALL NOT REST CONTENT UNTIL I CAN MAKE A LADY FLOAT ROUND THE AUDITORIUM OF A MUSIC-HALL, WITH ALL THE LIGHTS TURNED UP."

"TO PRODUCE FOUR RABBITS FROM NOWHERE WOULD BE A MUCH BETTER TRICK."

The magician of the future will have no use for apparatus which looks like conjuring apparatus and nothing else. All the articles he will use in his performance will be—apparently, at any rate—just ordinary articles. A trick which is obviously brought about by the use of some clever and ingenious piece of apparatus has no great interest for the public of to-day.

In the matter of apparatus there have been many improvements during the last twenty years. At one time every conjurer required the use of a table with a large cloth reaching to the floor in order to work his mysteries. The conjurer of to-day uses a table without a cloth. Magic has progressed, and it will go on progressing. There are hundreds of tricks which nobody sees, for the good and sufficient reason that they are not quite suitable for public presentation except under certain conditions.

Now, the public performer cannot make his own conditions. He has to perform in the place in which he is engaged to perform, whether it is exactly suitable for his performance or whether it is not. For that reason the conjurer cuts out all tricks which cannot be performed under any conditions. When magic advances a step or two farther—as it is doing

I produce a few handkerchiefs. The size of those handkerchiefs has never satisfied me. I have wanted them to be larger, but if they were larger they would cease to be handkerchiefs and would therefore not be suitable for my trick. But why should I not produce something much larger than handkerchiefs—say, curtains—and make a different trick of it altogether? The idea suggests something else. I have said that the illusions of the future will have to be more and more spectacular. Why should not the conjurer begin with a perfectly bare stage and evolve his own spectacle—curtains, borders, lights, draperies, tables, chairs, everything he wants for his performance—and then go on to a series of tricks?

That could be done. I do not say that it would be easy, but it could be done. Still, the conjurer who did that would be making a great difficulty for himself. Having produced the entire setting for his performance, with what illusion or trick is he to finish that performance? The concluding item should be something with a well-defined climax, something very spectacular, wonderful, effective. How would the conjurer go one better than his first great effect—the production of his entire setting? Frankly, I do not know, but I imagine that that difficulty would not be insurmountable.

"WHY SHOULD NOT THE CONJURER BEGIN WITH A PERFECTLY BARE STAGE AND EVOLVE EVERYTHING HE WANTS FOR HIS PERFORMANCE?"

"THE CRY EVERYWHERE IS FOR ENTERTAINMENT. AMUSE US; TAKE US OUT OF OURSELVES FOR A TIME."

and as it will continue to do—the public will get a whole crop of novelties, but they will not be real novelties; they will be some of those tricks which are in existence at this day but in an imperfect state. I must not say more on that point.

So far we have been considering the stage performer. What of the magician who performs in drawing-rooms, with his audience all round him and close to him? Is he also to improve in the future?

Yes—and no. I doubt very much if the drawing-room performer will ever improve on some of the oldest tricks in the world; but it will always be up to him to try to beat the master magicians of the past. But, however good some of the tricks of the future will be, I do not believe that the best of the old tricks will ever die, and it seems too much to expect the performers of the future to have greater dexterity than those of the present day. I am referring now to those magicians who specialize in little tricks suitable for a room. It is to be regretted that the section of the public which is fascinated by such tricks is small. One has to begin by being interested in magic before one can appreciate such tricks at their true worth.

The great public—the public for whom the music-hall performer caters—are not interested in these little sleight-of-hand tricks. The great public of the future will want something more than magic at a magical entertainment. One is made well aware of that fact to-day. The cry everywhere is for entertainment. Amuse us; entertain us; take us out of ourselves for a time. The magician who can do this finds that the public do not greatly care if the tricks are costly or cheap, beautiful or ugly, complicated or simple, as long as the performance is really entertaining. I imagine that the audiences of the future will be even more exacting in their demands in this matter of entertainment than the audiences of to-day, and that the magician who fails to recognize that fact will go under. Progression in the art of magic there will be—there must be—but I imagine that the improvements will not be purely and solely in magic itself, but in the manner in which the magician presents his mysteries to his audience. Who knows? Possibly the audiences of the future will be able to enjoy an entertainment which will be quite different from any entertainment of to-day, an entertainment in which magic will be skilfully blended, magic which will be more subtle than the magic of to-day.

It is quite possible also that the public may become more and more educated in magical matters, and may therefore be more ready to appreciate magic in the way in which the magician appreciates it. An enthusiastic magician would find great entertainment in watching half-a-dozen very clever magicians, one after the other, performing the same trick. An audience composed of members of the general public would be intensely bored by such a proceeding.

But is there any good reason why the general public should not be educated up to appreciate magic in this way? Perhaps that time will come, and some time in the far future our children or our children's children will all be enthusiastic amateur magicians, and will line up in queues to see some great miracle-worker give them of his best at a two hours' performance by himself alone. What a happy man he will be!

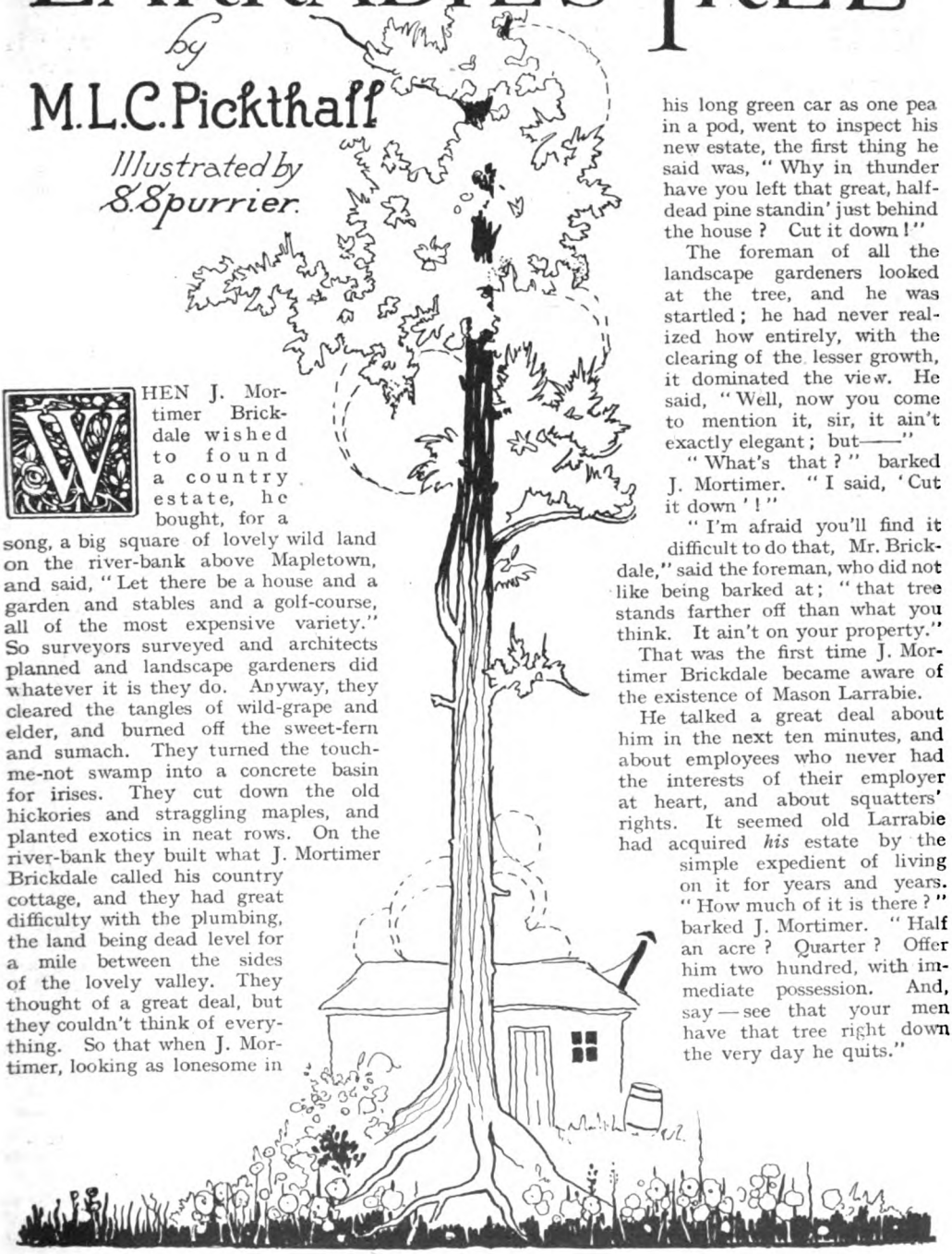
To sum up, I think that the magic of the future will be developed in more than one direction. Magic will be improved generally. It will be used as a basis of many entertainments which will not be entirely magical, and if only the public can be persuaded to believe that in magic a man can have an absorbing, interesting, and never-failing source of pleasure—even if he never performs a single trick himself—there is no reason why there should not be a very great revival in magic. When that revival comes some master magician will arise and will have a tremendously good time. I wish him luck.

LARRABIE'S TREE

by

M. L. C. Pickthall

Illustrated by S. Spurrier.



WHEN J. Mortimer Brickdale wished to found a country estate, he bought, for a song, a big square of lovely wild land on the river-bank above Mapletown, and said, "Let there be a house and a garden and stables and a golf-course, all of the most expensive variety." So surveyors surveyed and architects planned and landscape gardeners did whatever it is they do. Anyway, they cleared the tangles of wild-grape and elder, and burned off the sweet-fern and sumach. They turned the touch-me-not swamp into a concrete basin for irises. They cut down the old hickories and straggling maples, and planted exotics in neat rows. On the river-bank they built what J. Mortimer Brickdale called his country cottage, and they had great difficulty with the plumbing, the land being dead level for a mile between the sides of the lovely valley. They thought of a great deal, but they couldn't think of everything. So that when J. Mortimer, looking as lonesome in his long green car as one pea in a pod, went to inspect his new estate, the first thing he said was, "Why in thunder have you left that great, half-dead pine standin' just behind the house? Cut it down!"

The foreman of all the landscape gardeners looked at the tree, and he was startled; he had never realized how entirely, with the clearing of the lesser growth, it dominated the view. He said, "Well, now you come to mention it, sir, it ain't exactly elegant; but——"

"What's that?" barked J. Mortimer. "I said, 'Cut it down'!"

"I'm afraid you'll find it difficult to do that, Mr. Brickdale," said the foreman, who did not like being barked at; "that tree stands farther off than what you think. It ain't on your property."

That was the first time J. Mortimer Brickdale became aware of the existence of Mason Larrabie.

He talked a great deal about him in the next ten minutes, and about employees who never had the interests of their employer at heart, and about squatters' rights. It seemed old Larrabie had acquired *his* estate by the simple expedient of living on it for years and years. "How much of it is there?" barked J. Mortimer. "Half an acre? Quarter? Offer him two hundred, with immediate possession. And, say—see that your men have that tree right down the very day he quits."

They offered Mason Larrabie two hundred, which was not a bad price. They offered him two-fifty; three hundred; three-fifty; rising by degrees to five hundred. He refused all offers.

Brickdale went in person to offer him six hundred, and to tell him what he thought of him.

He went out from the city in the green car, and he was amazed and enraged to notice from what a distance the pine tree could be seen. Long before the ornate roofing of the country cottage or the gilded vane on the stables came into view the ruin of Larrabie's pine possessed the vision. It was as hopelessly at odds with the landscape gardening as a lighthouse would have been. Last giant of the forest which once had covered the land, it carved its gaunt outline unconquerably upon the blue.

Beyond his new asphalt driveway the green car bucked and swung in a sandy track, and stopped at a little gate. It was a home-made gate—slats and chicken-netting. Brickdale got out of the car, opened the gate, and went into Larrabie's garden.

His indignant eyes took in every detail; the starveling beds where silver trumpets of the woolly convolvulus grew among the tomatoes, and goldenrod crowded the cabbages. Everywhere were hens, ringstraked and spotted. On the only outcrop of granitic rock to be found in all that mild alluvial plain, Mason Larrabie in long-past days had built his shanty; and it was a shanty still, an old and untidy one. And garden, rock, and shanty alike were gripped and laced and bound together with the resinous roots of the pine; they lay in the earth everywhere, hard as red concrete where the hens had scratched them bare; they twisted among the stones like cables; and buttressed that gaunt shaft, jagged with broken branches, that sprang heavenward from the shanty's very door-sill.

"Are you Mason Larrabie?"

The old man, who sat in an armchair among the twisted roots, pulled his corncob pipe out of his mouth, said "I be," and put the pipe back again. He was a shabby old man on the verge of rags; he had eyes of a heavenly blue; these rested on J. Mortimer Brickdale with a gentle expression.

Brickdale was trying hard to be genial. He had said to his agents, "I'll have to do this job myself, I see. You don't handle these people right. You have to jolly 'em along. That's it—jolly 'em along." In accordance with this design, he opened breezily.

"See here," he said, "I guess there's been a little misunderstanding, and I've come to set it right. I've come myself. You know who I am, hey? I guess you do. I'm Brickdale. And you know what I've come about, hey? You've been trying to be a little bit too clever, hey?" He shook his finger jollily and laughed. "Well, I've come to have a little talk with you. I'm sure we can fix things up between us with a little straight talk. You're cute, I can see that; you don't like dealing through lawyers and agents, and I'm with you there. I'm straight. And I come straight to the point. What I want to know is—just friendly between you and me—what'll you take for this nice little place of yours? Fine little place! Well—six hundred, hey? What do you say to that, hey?"

Mason Larrabie slowly removed his corncob pipe. "I'll say to that," he answered, mildly, "what Cousin Steve Larrabie's sister Jane said to the book-agent when he come courtin'."

"What's that?"

"'Scat, young feller,'" said Mason Larrabie, and once more corked himself with his pipe.

Brickdale kept a tight hold on himself. "If you won't take a good offer like that," he said, as casually as he could, "you're the loser. They're"—he choked—"they're generous terms. I won't raise 'em."

"I ben't askin' you to, be I?"

"See here," Brickdale tried again. "If you won't sell the land, what will you take for that tree, hey?"

"What do you want o' my tree?"

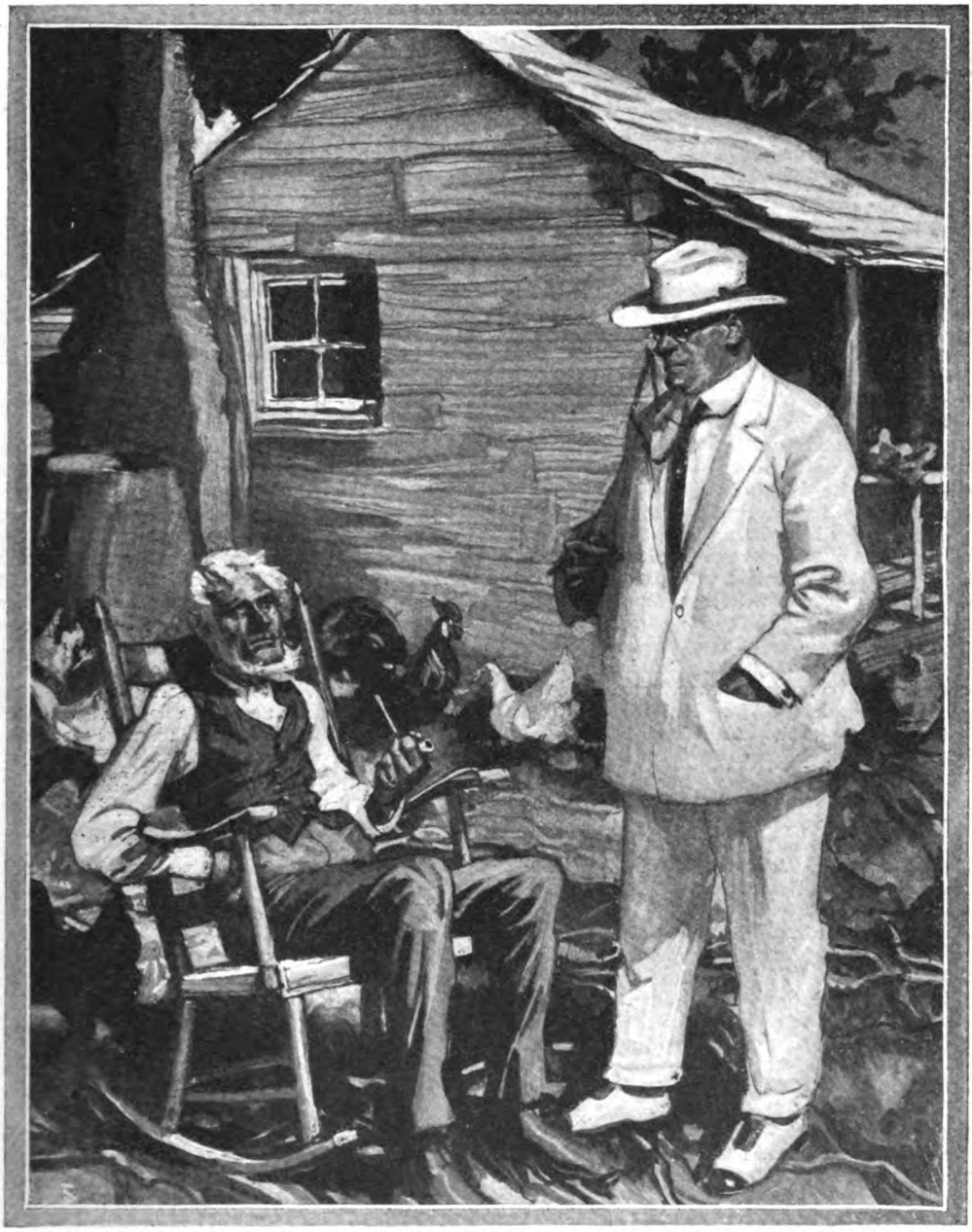
"It spoils my view. I want to cut it down. I'll give you——"

He backed, suddenly silent. Mason Larrabie had risen from his chair. He seemed to tower over the rich man as his tree towered over the rich man's land. He raised his hands, wagging them slowly at the astonished Mr. Brickdale.

"*You?*" he began, softly. "*You* wanter cut my tree down? Why, that tree was a tree when yore grandfather come out o' the emigrant-ship carryin' his property in a borrered handkerchieve! And it'll be standin' when what's left o' *you*'s spilin' a vase in a fash'nable crematorium. There ain't another like it in a hundred mile! You offer me fer it?" He moved down on Brickdale, his eyes gleaming. "Offer me all you got, you pore mushroom in pants, and——" The passion faded from his face, once more he was serene—"and I'll say to you what Cousin Steve Larrabie's sister Jane ses to the undertaker when he come to arrange fer the funeral afore she was rightly deceased. 'Ye're a mite hasty, Mr. Mellin; good arternoon,' she ses." He seated himself once more and smiled gently at Mr. Brickdale.

"You'll regret this!" said Brickdale, as soon as he could speak, and went away hastily. He had never been so affronted as by this old vagabond and his intolerable tree.

He moved into his country cottage in due time, and the tree worried him from the first. From the lower branches Larrabie's hens launched themselves intrepidly to scratch in his new strawberry beds; a pair of horned owls dwelt there too; they spared their landlord's straggling chicks, but carried off all Brickdale's prize Wyandottes. As time went on, his dislike of the tree became one of those strange nervous obsessions which fret a man's sense of proportion to powder as a beetle gnaws a timber to dust. He could not explain to himself why it bulked so large in his mental as well as his material skies. It ruled his horizons; in some obscure way it humiliated him; he was through it made aware of some vast, still spirit at war with him and his. At every sunset its shadow, stark as a cross, sprang clear across his golf-course, and he cursed at the darkening bunker because he wasn't



"WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS—JUST FRIENDLY BETWEEN YOU AND ME—WHAT'LL YOU TAKE FOR THIS NICE LITTLE PLACE OF YOURS?"

allowed to forget the thing even when he had his back to it.

He was not a bad man, but he would descend to anything under continuously applied nervous irritation. There was a doubt—a possibility—squatters' rights were not always very sound——

He went into the city, in the green car, with a mumbled order to the chauffeur. The man caught the word "lawyers," but when he would have stopped at the doors of the firm who did most of Brickdale's business, his master barked at him: "What you stoppin' here for? I said West and Roddy, Lake Avenue." West and Roddy were but a dirty firm, and it was but a dirty job Brickdale was taking them.

They worked underground, like moles; fattening on mistakes and neglects and misconceptions. With some shame Brickdale left them to it. It seemed he had a very good case.

Things were not going too well with the estate.

It was a very wet autumn, and the river crept inch by inch up the level of the herbaceous borders, dribbled into the cellars, and turned the golf-course into a puddle. Day followed day of grey and driving wet. Wet winds whipped the rotting leaves from Brickdale's exotics, nipped his tender roses, splashed mud upon his plate-glass windows. The impudence of Nature surprised him. The pine was a shadow, moaning day and night with the voices of desolation. He hated it with a personal hatred.

Meanwhile, the moles were busy; one morning Brickdale looked up from the papers on his great library table, and saw through the window old Mason Larrabie coming up the new gravel drive, clasping another paper to the breast of his shabby coat.

Brickdale's soul was not yet stifled in him; he felt a qualm, an impulse to hide. But Larrabie was in the room as if he had been a leaf blown in by the wind. He looked thin as a leaf. The rain had sleeked the white hair close to his head, for he wore no hat. His blue eyes had the unseeing look of the blind. He went to Brickdale's table and laid upon it the paper he had carried; it was a letter; it was splashed with rain as though someone had wept over it.

"This——" he hesitated; his voice failed him; he looked very old. "This here," he began again, "come to me awhile ago. I dunno that I rightly take it all in. But the meat of it's this: I ain't no legal claim to 'bout half the land I'm livin' on. Is that so?"

"Oh, not half," said Brickdale, smoothly. "Not so much as that, Mr. Larrabie. About fifty feet on the south side."

"So you know all about it?" returned the old man, swiftly. A spark was waking in his blue eyes. But Brickdale met them hardly enough.

"I know about it. I had the records examined and a fresh survey made. I warned you. Your land——"

Larrabie swept the words aside with a slow gesture which in some way reminded Brickdale of the movement of the pine in the wind. "There's a lot here," he said, touching the letter, "which I ain't got clear yet—about boundaries, and registrations, and fences, and settlers' rights—it don't matter. Seems I ain't done a lot o' things I'd oughter have done. But till you come there was no one wanted my land, anyway. It ain't worth much. Seems as if a strip of it belongs rightly to your property. Is that so?"

"That's so. There's no doubt of it. But you're at liberty to fight me through every court in the land."

"I ain't no money to fight you, an' you know it. But it don't matter. There's other things to fight you with besides money, though you ain't learned it yet. Well—what I come to ask you's this: my tree stands on that fifty-foot strip you're grabbing. You know that?"

"I know it." Brickdale was almost good-humoured. He thought the old fellow was coming to terms—that Larrabie would save him from doing a thing he didn't like doing. "You'd have done better to take my offer in the first place, hey?"

"No," said the old man, steadily, "I'd have done worse. So you're takin' my land just so's you can lop my tree down?"

"I don't want the land you're occupying," said Brickdale, hastily; "but that ugly great tree's comin' down, or I'll know the reason why. See here. Can't you show some sense? Give me leave to buy that tree for firewood—at a fancy price—and this here"—he tapped the letter—"all this business shall go into the waste-basket and no more said. See?"

Mason Larrabie did not see. He was not listening. He was gazing through the plate-glass window at the pine.

He knew his tree in every mood and aspect, as a man knows the woman he loves. He knew it when in the dawn it seemed to be again of some substance tender with growth; he knew it high against the noon; he knew it softened against an infinity of stars. In spring he would lay his ear to it lovingly, and fancy that he heard the sap rising through the great shaft, hard as stone, that yet responded in new tassels delicate as green foam. He received from it a hundred divine dumb assurances, the worn old man from the worn old tree. And it was to be taken from him—cut down.

"Not while I live," he said, aloud. He turned to Brickdale with a face of white passion. The rich man was aware again of a spirit at war with him and his; for an instant it almost seemed it was the tree threatening him. "Brickdale," cried the old man, "if the land from here to Labrador was yore own, still you've no *right* to tech that tree!"

"Then you won't come to terms?"

"With *you*? We'll fight you while we stand me an' my tree!"

"Then I've no more to say. You're crazy. Get out"

Brickdale turned away contemptuously, but some look in the old man's face held him. "We've got more to say to *you* before we're done!" said Larrabie, under his breath, and for a flash Brickdale shrank as if from some weight ready to fall on him. Then there was only an old man walking down the drive, swayed by the wind and the rain.

Whatever else there was of law-business Brickdale hastened on. Larrabie opposed nothing. He had no case; and no money to build a case. Haled once or twice to the city, he was nothing but a confused, ignorant old countryman. He spent all his days sitting at the door of the shack, staring at the doomed tree dripping in the endless rain. It was his brother, in that it had been born long ago of the homely soil, and went heavenward. The rare clear nights saw him standing hour-long in its austere shadow, his cheek laid to the cold bark, shuddering as if the cross-cut saws would be laid to the roots of his own life as well. "Cut you down, my beauty?" he mumbled. "Not while I'm here, they sha'n't." What could he do, one weak, silly old man? He didn't know. But over him the dark, aged boughs sighed out some tremendous

breath of comfort, some word too vast for him to comprehend.

The rains continued, a sullen torrent by day, by night a slate-coloured drive across the white frost-moon. Brickdale's establishment suffered from colds and rheumatism. He began to think of leaving his country cottage for his apartments in the city. But first he wanted to get the tree cut down and done with.

A new wire fence, running along the revised boundary line, severed Mason Larrabie from his tree; but he and the hens disregarded it. He seemed to be always beneath it, haggardly waiting for the final tragedy. He made Brickdale uncomfortable with his silence and his resistance. Brickdale was alone now, living in two rooms of his country cottage; the other servants had been sent back to the city, only a groom remained to light fires, feed his master with tinned foods, and care for the two overfed horses in the denuded stable which were to convey Brickdale to the city in two days' time. In two days the tree was to come down. Brickdale sighed with relief when he saw a lorry splashing through the floods laden with ropes, ladders, saws, axes, and a couple of men in oilskins, who spat disconsolately as they viewed the pine tree. "Some job," they said. "Who's the old feller leanin' against the trunk? He looks sick." But no one answered them as Mason Larrabie crept away into his shanty and shut the door. "We'll be back on time to-morrer," they said, "if the weather lets us through."

Brickdale told them that they must be back to-morrow and complete the job, weather or no weather. A gust of wind, taking the pine as he spoke to them, showered him with drops so cold that they stung like bullets. He swore and went into his house. He went to bed early, and dreamed that he was in a sinking ship, and that the waves were going over him.

He woke some hours later, breathlessly alert. What had roused him he did not know. The darkness was full of an uneasy sense of movement. It was as if hundreds of unseen hands were fingering the house, pushing it, squeezing it. Creaks and complaints came from walls and floor; in Brickdale's mind lingered the memory of a crash heard in sleep. He lay bewildered, feeling a vibration crawl through the springs of the bed beneath him. He could hear the rain a steady drive on the roof, as it had driven for hours and for days. A deeper note was added to it, and as he listened something struck the house. He felt it. It struck silently, yet with such force that for one reeling instant he fancied the dark square of his bedroom had lifted and settled again like a ship. Then, from outside, rain and darkness were split by a wild, inhuman cry.

It was a cry that hooked Brickdale out of bed as a line hooks a perch out of a pool. He was shaking so that he could scarcely find the button of the electric light. He pressed it at last, pressed it till it broke, but no light followed. He sprang to the window, a vague grey square in the darkness, and flung up the blind.

His first thought, when his eyes were cleared to the gloom, was the confused one that he had somehow gone to bed on the ground floor. A grey level stretched a few feet below him, pitted and ruffled with the unceasing rain. He could recognize nothing of his familiar garden landmarks; everything was changed, strange, threatening. From somewhere in the night came another muffled crash, and the frantic inhuman screaming broke out once more. A shadow ran across the grey level at which Brickdale blankly stared, a shadow lipped with foam, which silently struck at him, splashing up the wall beneath him. He shrank back with a cry, turned, and stumbled to his door.

He flung it open. Instantly the dark of the closed house was full of a dozen voices that yet were one—the voice of running water. He felt again that he was going down in the hold of a sinking ship. Blind panic shut his throat. He managed to shout hoarsely for "Light, light!"

A light answered him. March, the young groom, came down the attic stairs four at a time, carrying a lantern. In this hour of stunning unusualness, Brickdale saw him for the first time as a man and not as a servant. He was in shirt and breeches, his hair rough, his feet bare and flashing white on the stairs. The dreadful screaming went on, piercing the dull sound of the rain and the flood as lightning rends a cloud. Brickdale ran to the groom. He said, "What is it? Oh, what *is* it?" March thrust him aside, saying only, "My horses!" He went past Brickdale in a flash to the lower hall. Brickdale heard him splashing in water; the lantern light danced on oily ripples, where a Persian prayer-rug floated grotesquely. Knee-high in water, March was struggling with the front door. His strained face looked back at Brickdale. He panted, roughly, "Here, help me, you!"

Brickdale found himself tearing at the bolts beside March. The door came open at last, and the inrush of the flood-water almost swept them off their feet, though both were big men. March panted: "It'll be the dam at Cedar Lake gone! Come to the stables! My horses—we must get the horses out!" Holding the lantern high, he thrust his other arm roughly through Brickdale's. They fought their way towards the stables.

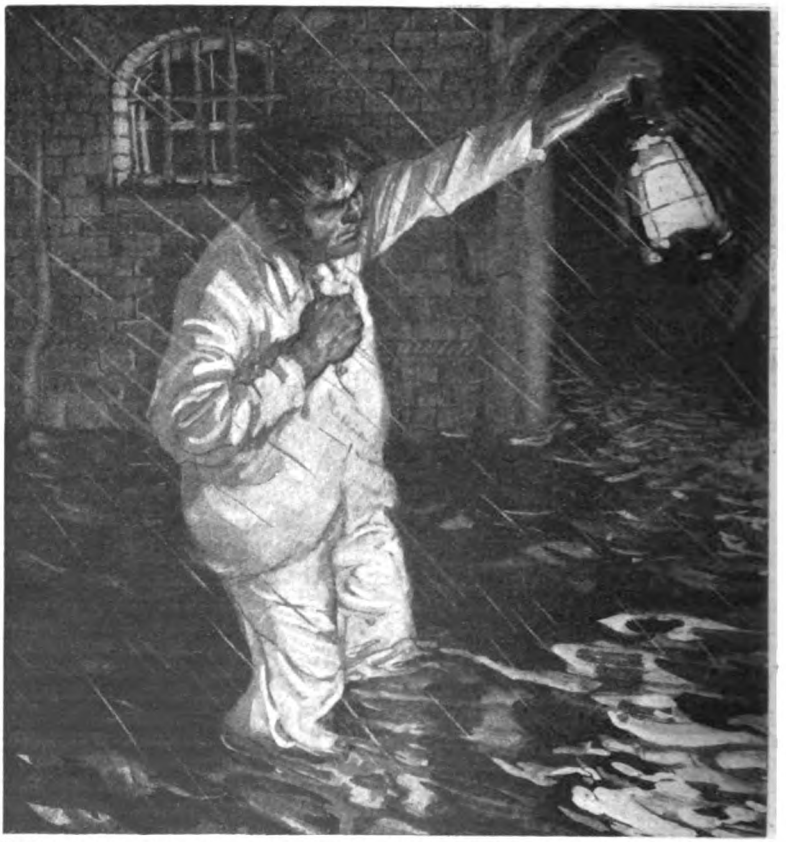
The water drove at them out of the dark in ugly swirls, crested with drift. The rain hissed against the stable-lantern. They moved in a narrow ring of light, and without was chaos and the voices of destruction. Twice Brickdale stumbled and would have fallen but for the hand gripping him; he was lost in body as well as mind; the very direction of his drowning house was gone from him. And the water was growing deeper.

The screaming of the horses was near them now. Brickdale felt concrete under his feet, blessedly solid. March pushed him up two steps and thrust the lantern into his hands. "Hold it high," he commanded, curtly, "and don't move. Keep right there, or you'll be knocked down and tramped to pulp as they come out. I'm goin' to try and head 'em inland." He left Brickdale and leaped to the door of the stables; his rough, strong young voice went before him, crying cheerily to the horses, "Steady, now,

Paragon! Steady there, Pet! Quit that noise now! I'm comin' to you, I'm comin'." Brickdale thought the horses quieted at the voice; he was strangely struck by its beauty—the beauty of kindly strength. He felt also strangely alone and forgotten.

March had the door open and was in—at the risk of his life. The stables were between the river and the house, and the river-wall was gone already, taking the chimney with it. The beasts were mad in their stalls. Brickdale, holding the lantern, nearly dropped it as Pet tore through the doorway and passed him in a storm of foam. He would not have recognized the sleek mare as she flashed by with foaming muzzle and flaring eyes; he heard the splash and thunder of her hoofs as she fled inland along his drowning terraces, and his breath drew cold; there were things in life——

Paragon, less maddened, was out, galloping for the higher fields; he also tore by, sending a great fan of water over Brickdale and the lantern; and beside him, holding to the straps, went March in long flying leaps. He yelled something to Brickdale as he went past, but the words were lost. In the reeling lantern-light Brickdale saw him swing himself incredibly to Paragon's broad back. His mind seized one picture that was to remain with him all his life, of the strong figure of his young groom in his drenched clothes, astride the rearing horse. Then horse and rider were gone into the night. Brickdale was left alone.



"THE HORSE TORE BY, AND BESIDE HIM, HOLDING TO THE STRAPS, WENT AS HE WENT PAST, BUT

It was probably the first time in his life he had ever been alone. He did not like it. The bitter cold water was lipping at his knees as he stood on the steps, desperately hugging the lantern. He squattered down from the steps, and it rose to mid-thigh. He was in soaked pyjamas, and was mortally cold. His soft, well-fed flesh quivered and crept from the water and the mire. He had his direction from the stables, though, and March had left him the lantern. He would go back to his house, get in the attic, or on the roof, and wait for the waters to subside.

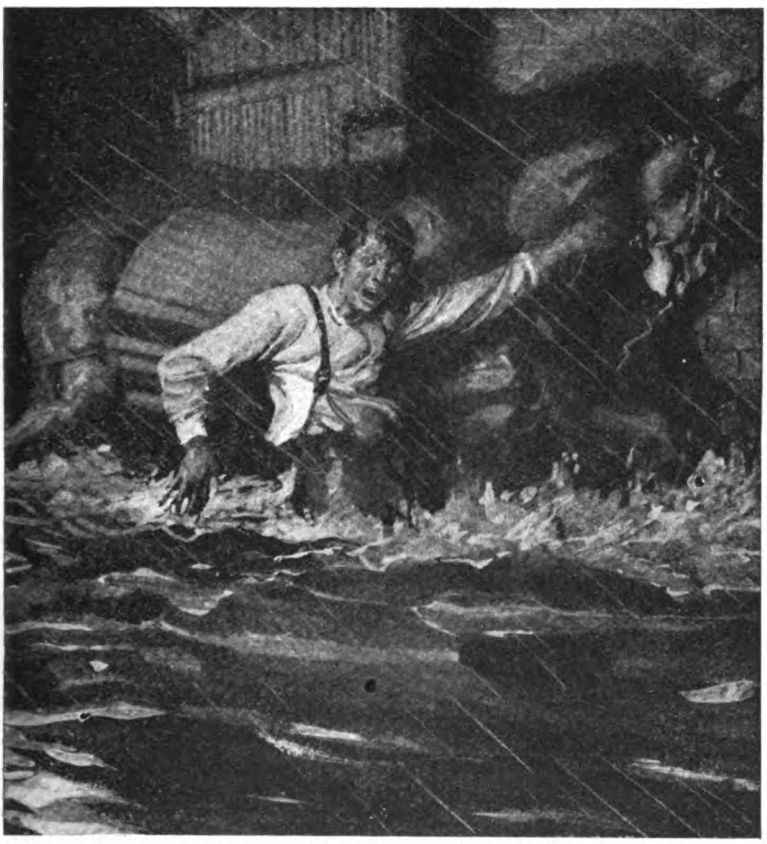
He set off cautiously, holding the lantern high. Things went past him in the narrow, glimmering circle; he saw small timbers, branches, trusses of hay, a dead sheep. He shrank rigidly from these things. Curious sucking, sliding noises were all about him. He saw a newly-planted Japanese cherry-tree heel over silently and drag away into the night. Strange things were under-foot, the very earth was turning fluid and running away. He slipped into a hollow and the cold water sprang to his heart. He gasped. Fighting his way up and out, he fancied hands clutching at the tail of his jacket to draw him down. He floundered on. But his sense of direction was at fault. Plunging forward, he suddenly plunged, as it were, over the edge of the earth.

He went down, clutching the extinguished lantern; came up choking; went down the second time before he came to his senses sufficiently to drop the lantern and strike out. He could swim a few strokes, but that was little use with the whole weight of the flooded river pressing on his chest. There, in the dark and the flood, he knew fear; he screamed as the horses had done. The waves and billows went over his soul. He fought on, struggling with the water.

He felt stones under his feet at last; he did

not know that he had been struggling all the time with a friendly eddy under the bank of what had been his own vegetable garden; and that the eddy had at last succeeded in casting him ashore. He climbed sobbing through the slush and staggered away from the river. He was utterly lost. His one idea was to get to some dry spot of ground, if such remained in the universe, and lie down and die on it.

He thought that he staggered for many miles. He was aware at last of something great, a vaster shadow in the shadows, towering before him.



MARCH IN LONG FLYING LEAPS. HE YELLED SOMETHING TO BRICKDALE THE WORDS WERE LOST."

He crept towards it. It was the great pine. He stumbled sobbing among the roots. A singular fragrance greeted him; the fragrance of warm, wet hens. Some few feet up in the gloom it was as if the ancient trunk had sprouted a huge black fungus. From under this fungus came a soft, droning voice.

Standing against the tree, Brickdale spoke faintly. "Larrabie!"

"Who be you?"

"It's me—Brickdale. For the sake of pity, give me a hand up. The flood's rising still, and I can't find my house. I'm all but dead."

There was a silence. Then—"Wait till I fix the umbereller and clear these pesky fowls," came the serene old voice from the tree, "an' I'll be down right *to* you."

Brickdale broke down. "God bless you, Larrabie!" he quavered; "you are a good man. I'm—sorry I ever did a thing to you, Larrabie. I—where are you, Larrabie? Don't leave me here. The water's to my waist as I stand on the roots."

"Here I be. My hand's above you. 'You must come up higher, friend,' as Cousin Steve Larrabie's sister Jane ses when she was standin' on the step-ladder an' the baker wanted ter kiss her. Put your foot on that old stump o' branch, and jump when I give the word. Now!"

Brickdale jumped desperately. There was a scratching and clawing, an immense confusion of hens. Larrabie was hauling him upwards. He sank at last on a wide bough with his back to the trunk. He was used up, done. He wondered vaguely if he were going to faint.

"Hold up, Brickdale. Don't ye give in, man. I got somethin' here'll fix you. Drat them fowls! they be all over me."

Brickdale sucked greedily at the bottle. Opening his eyes, he saw old Mason Larrabie's face near his own. He said, weakly: "Will we be safe here?"

"Ye're quite safe here, Brickdale. Neither wind nor rain, frost nor flood 'll shake this tree. It's stood ten times the life o' such as we, Brickdale. It's rooted in the livin' rock. Slow as time, the years built it up. 'Tis only the years should break it down."

Brickdale bent his head. He stretched out his hand and touched the rough, scented bark against which he leaned. The great trunk was solid and reassuring as stone. He looked up to the dark boughs roofing him; he felt secure as if he had been suddenly gathered in some tremendous arm, laid to some vast breast. He touched Larrabie with the same trembling hand.

"It shall stand another hundred years," he mumbled. "D'you understand? *I* didn't. Forgive me, Larrabie. I'll never cut it down."

Larrabie did not answer directly. In a minute he said, "Here's a blanket, Brickdale. I brought it up in case o' bein' here some while. Put it round yore shoulders."

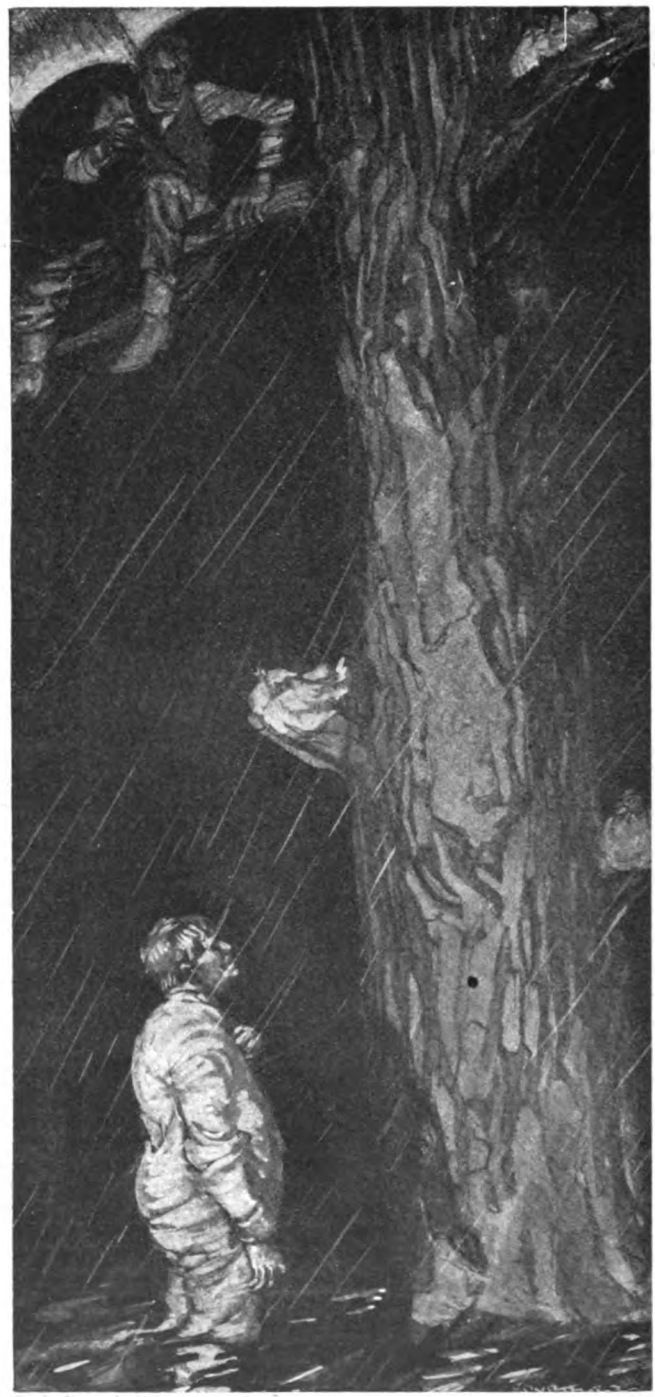
Brickdale wrapped himself in silence. By and by he said, humbly, "Won't you share the blanket, Larrabie?" The old man crept nearer to him. They huddled together for warmth. The hens made drowsy, throaty noises around them; under them the flood rose; over them was the rain and the night. The slow hours seemed to drift past them palpably as the water did. Yet, in the hold of the tree, they were safe.

After a long time Brickdale said, "That the dawn, Larrabie?"

"Yes, like a rose. I been watchin' it. Many dawns I seen, but not so many as my tree. There's a voice cryin' on you somewhere."

Brickdale listened, and then said, "It's young March," and called hoarsely in answer.

There was a sound of tearing branches. Poling a punt, March swung through the tops of the undergrowth towards the pine. His face glinted up at them whitely. He looked weary, and spoke like a man in a dream.



"'WHO BE YOU?' 'IT'S ME—BRICKDALE. FOR THE SAKE OF PITY, GIVE ME A HAND UP. THE FLOOD'S RISING STILL, AND I CAN'T FIND MY HOUSE. I'M ALL BUT DEAD.'"

"I come as soon as I could, sir. As soon as I got my horses safe."

Brickdale smiled faintly. March poled the boat under the pine and held it to the roots. "If you drop, sir," he said, anxiously, "it's steady to ketch you. The horses is all right, sir, but Pet's cut her hock an inch deep."

"That's all right," said Brickdale. "I'm glad to see you safe, March." He was descending stiffly and cautiously. "We'll all be the better for some dry clothes and some breakfast," he went on, "but as soon as we've put Mr. Larrabie ashore, March, we're comin' back, you an' me, an' we're goin' to pull out every strand and stake o' that wire fence we put in along the boundary line of my land. This tree stands on Mr. Larrabie's land, March, and don't you forget it!"

The sun cleared the heavy clouds and sent a shaft across the world that crowned with fire Larrabie's tree, the one unchanged thing in all the ravaged land.

The ROMANCE of SELF-MADE MEN

No. II.

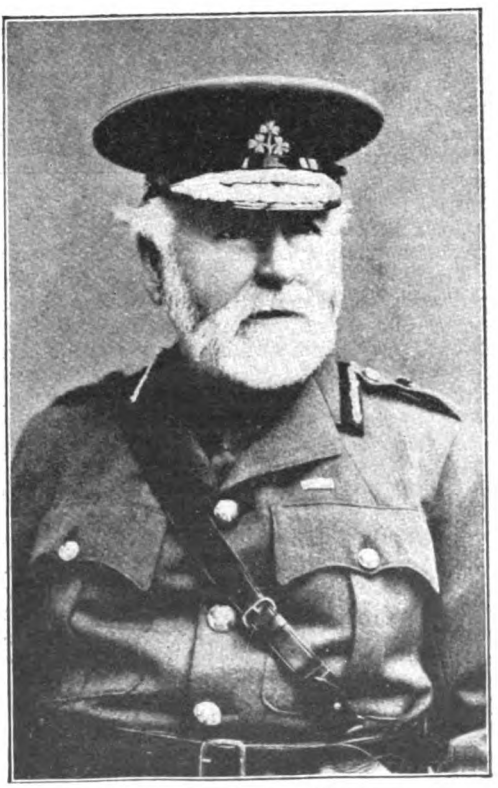
LORD PIRRIE.

By JAMES DOUGLAS.

EVERY Londoner knows No. 1, Cockspur Street, the headquarters of Lord Pirrie, the greatest shipping and shipbuilding organizer in the world. It is a building that looks like a liner, with the flood-tide of traffic from Pall Mall and the Haymarket breaking on its bows. As you enter the building you are impressed by the strange, mysterious quiet of the place, with its solemn and solitary vistas of sombre, polished wood. You feel like a fish out of water as you are ushered into the great, echoing board-room, where invisible millions of pounds seem to haunt the long, bare table and the rows of empty chairs. In a corner there is a working model of a gleaming new invention, the nature of which is a profound secret. Its brass and steel watch you as you wait, and they appear to be eagerly straining to commence their career as labour-savers, time-savers, and money-makers.

Presently the door opens, and a keen-eyed young man with an American accent leads you into a spacious room. A little spectacled old man jumps out of his chair at a desk and with a brisk, light step and a jolly smile hastens to shake your hand. He is two-and-seventy years of age; his close-clipped hair and moustache and beard are white; he ought to be tired, feeble, and weary of the world; but you discover in two minutes that he is not tired or feeble or weary of the world. He convinces you in three minutes that it is you and not he who is tired, feeble, and weary of the world. In five minutes you have come to the conclusion that this little, white-haired septuagenarian is intensely alive, and that for years you have been dead and buried, but that by some miracle you have been allowed to get out of your grave in order to see what being alive really means.

As this snowy little tornado chatters at the rate of three hundred words a minute you silently reproach yourself for having been indolently dormant all your life, and not violently energetic like the amazing little being whose bright eyes are twinkling humorously through his glasses at you, and whose sparkling smile is as youthful as the hair round it is venerable. He does not take himself as seriously as you are prepared to



LORD PIRRIE AT THE PRESENT DAY

Photo Baird

take him. He chuckles like a happy schoolboy as he talks airily about his twelve-hour day, and almost suggests that a twenty-four-hour day would afford him a chance of getting through some work.

It is disconcerting to know that you are being sandwiched in between two board meetings. In your innocence you had imagined that one board a day would wear out the energy of a child of seventy-two. But Lord Pirrie does not like a dull day of that sort. He prefers to have a merry time with his boards. He is like a girl at her first ball who dances every dance. Lord Pirrie dances all day with his boards and his diverse interests. He would dance all night with them, if Lady Pirrie would permit him to do so; but she drives up at six o'clock every evening to No. 1, Cockspur Street, and she never goes away without him, even if she finds it necessary to let him amuse himself with business till nine o'clock. She is his business partner, in fact, and she knows all that is going on in that busy little white head behind those twinkling little eyes. She often writes his letters. She discusses with him all his plans and schemes. She gives him sound, shrewd advice, and altogether she is his right-hand woman. Lord Pirrie makes no secret of the active part that his wife has played in his career. He does not deny that some small fraction of his success is due to his own brain, but he delights in proving to you that he would have been a failure if he had not been the lucky husband of a very marvellous wife. If you encourage him, he will arouse your suspicion that he is an impostor who has festooned himself with the millions made and the honours won by his better-half.

It would be cheering if you could convict Lord Pirrie of any human foible or vice, but he really does not seem to have time for sins of any sort. Now, it is easy to forgive a man for being a millionaire, with too many seats on too many boards and with too many titles to be easily remembered, and with huge shipyards and engineering works at Belfast, Liverpool, Southampton, and the Clyde. But it is not easy to forgive him for being almost inhumanly sinless.

LADY PIRRIE.
Photo. Swaine.

Exercising the privileges of an old friend—I have known him for thirty years—I indignantly asked him to tell me whether he ever condescended to smoke in secret.

He lay back in his chair and laughed derisively at me.

"Smoke!" he said. "I have no time to smoke."

I think he was sorry for me, and he feebly tried to palliate his offence.

"You remember," he reminded me, "that Harland never smoked. He used to light a cigarette for the sake of being sociable."

"At least," said I, "you are not a total abstainer."

I am sure he was glad to soothe me with the assurance that he really and positively and actually enjoyed a glass of claret or champagne, and I was glad to know that after all he is not the conventional dyspeptic millionaire who dines off a dry biscuit and a glass of soda-water.

"Of course," I joyfully remarked, "you go to the theatre." I felt sure that I had got him on the downward path.

It is only fair to say that he did his best to reassure me. He tried to recall the last play he had seen.

"No," he said, "I don't care for the modern drama, but I like 'Diplomacy' and plays of that sort."

It was plain to me that he could not be described as a besotted playgoer. However, I did not abandon my quest of his peccadilloes. Rather pettishly I exclaimed:—

"Have you no hobbies?"

And then the truth came out. He has a few other hobbies besides his boards and his multifarious enterprises. He farms, he breeds cattle, he fishes, and he shoots—between boards.

I breathed again, and expressed my satisfaction with the discovery that he had some pleasures in his laborious life, explaining

HE HAS A FEW OTHER HOBBIES BESIDES HIS BOARDS AND HIS MULTIFARIOUS ENTERPRISES. HE FARMS—

that there is a popular belief that all millionaires are miserable men.

This was too much. I had gone too far.

"Work," he earnestly assured me, "is my pleasure. There is no pleasure like work. I am never idle. I work all day. I am about to start on a tour of some four or five weeks. My wife goes with me on my tours. But when I come back I must show you my herd of pedigree cattle at Witley Park."

I had heard of Lord Pirrie's tours. While he was Controller-General of Merchant Shipbuilding he tired out his whole staff while he was touring the yards. He usually inspected four or five shipyards a day—two in the morning and two or three in the afternoon. Sir Edward Harland, the founder

HE BREEDS CATTLE—

of Harland and Wolff, was a man with an all-seeing eye. His eye was famous on the Queen's Island. As he walked through shops he saw everything without looking to right or left.

He had an all-smelling nose as well as an all-seeing eye. One day he was walking rapidly along, and suddenly he stopped dead and sniffed at a saw-pit. In a flash the trapdoor was lifted, and there squatting in the sawdust was a wizened little man, puffing at a little clay pipe. It was believed that Sir Edward Harland had a telescope at his house through which on one occasion he detected an Orangeman dropping a hammer on a Papist.

I do not know whether Lord Pirrie's eye is capable of such a feat as that, but I am told that his tour round the shipyards is like a royal progress, and that he can see more in an hour than the ordinary man can see in a week.

Lord Pirrie is a very simple man, and the foundation of his simple character was laid by his good Ulster mother, Eliza Montgomery, daughter of Alexander Montgomery, of Dundesart, Co. Antrim. His father was James Alexander Pirrie, of Clandeboye, Co. Down. His grandfather, William Pirrie, had

HE FISHES—

played an important part in the development of the harbour of Belfast.

In 1846 James Alexander Pirrie and Eliza Pirrie emigrated to Canada. Their only son, William James Pirrie, was born at Quebec in 1847, but shortly after his birth his father died, and the young widow brought her baby back to her own old home at Conlig, Co. Down. Eliza Pirrie devoted herself to the education of her son. She sent him in due time to the Royal Academical Institution at Belfast. He worked hard and distinguished himself at mathematics. His

AND HE SHOOTS.

mother wrote a little book of maxims for his guidance, and throughout his life he has carried it with him wherever he went. Some day I hope he will publish this treasure of maternal love and wisdom, but here are some passages in it which he has allowed me to quote :—

You have your own way to make. It depends on your own exertions whether you starve or not.

It is the result of everyday experience that steady attention to matters of detail lies at the root of human progress, and that diligence above all is the mother of good luck.

Accuracy also is of much importance, and an invariable mark of good training in a man —accuracy in observation, accuracy in speech, accuracy in the transaction of affairs.

AN EARLY PORTRAIT OF LORD PIRRIE.
Photo. Magil.

What is done in business must be well done; for it is better to accomplish perfectly a small amount of work than half do ten times as much.

A wise man used to say, "Stay a little that we may make an end the sooner."

Simple industry and studious exactness would be the making of Ireland.

Method is essential, and enables a large amount of work to be got through with satisfaction.

Despatch comes with practice.

Never postpone until to-morrow what should be done to-day.

If you want your work well done, says the proverb, go and do it; if you don't want it done, send someone else.

Lord Pirrie some years ago said :—

Were I asked to give a message to the youth of the present day, as to the virtues that make for success in commercial life, and the faults and vices leading to life's failures, I would put first of all, as the chief corner-stone, this :—

Respect your parents' wisdom and good advice. Follow it closely as a sacred duty.

A mother's saintly character, her prayers and earnest exhortations to virtuous living and noble deeds, should be cherished as a Divine favour.

At the outset of his career a young man could not do better than resolve that nothing shall enter into his life of which his mother would not approve, or which would cause her pain.

Having done this, he may, I think, rightly resolve that it shall not be his fault if he does not make his way in the world.

Lord Pirrie lays great stress upon the value of the early training he received from his mother. "In my mother's notebook great stress is laid on the importance of such qualities as industry, perseverance, fidelity, self-reliance, self-culture, integrity of character. The young man who cultivates these qualities—and remember they can be cultivated—is bound to succeed."

It is the custom to-day to keep boys at school and at the University till they are out of their teens. "Willie" Pirrie left the Royal Academical Institution at the age of fifteen, and in 1862 he went straight into Harland and Wolff's little shipyard at Queen's Island as an apprentice. Sir Edward Harland in 1858 had taken over a small yard employing only a hundred workmen. Mr. G. W. Wolff had come in as his partner in 1862. There was a golden chance for a live young man in this live young business, and young Pirrie seized it with both hands. He rose rapidly from the position of an apprentice and became successively draughtsman, sub-manager, and assistant manager.

AN EARLY PORTRAIT OF LADY PIRRIE.
Photo. Savony.

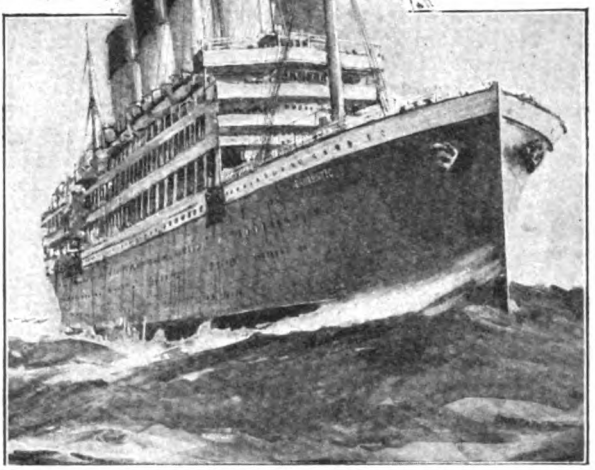
At the age of twenty-seven he became a partner. It took him only twelve years to climb from the bottom of the ladder to the top. There were only four slips when he entered the works; there are now forty-three. In 1913 Harland and Wolff employed on an average thirteen thousand three hundred and seventy-five men, with a weekly wage-roll of twenty-five thousand pounds. Last year they employed twenty-one thousand five hundred and fifty men, with a weekly wage-roll of seventy-two thousand pounds. The works cover an area of two hundred and twenty acres. Lord Dufferin, the famous Ambassador, declared that by his exertion Lord Pirrie had lifted Belfast to the position of being the third greatest commercial city in the British Empire. The total number of men employed by the works at Belfast, Liverpool, Southampton, and the Clyde is about forty thousand men, with a total weekly wages-bill of

one hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds.

Such a career to some extent supports Lord Rothermere's recent indictment of the University as a training-ground for business men. I remember that Sir Edward Harland held the same view as to the worthlessness of an academic education. He once said to me, "If I were founding a college I should not allow a single book in it. I should teach boys to use their hands as well as their brains." And undoubtedly the half-educated boy who starts his business career at fifteen has an enormous advantage in time over the young man who starts it at twenty-one. On the other hand, the completely educated man has an enormous advantage over the half-educated man. There is no hard-and-fast rule. Education is not a liquid that can be poured into every human receptacle. A boy like Pirrie would have got the last ounce of benefit out of the Queen's University just as he got the last ounce of benefit out of the Queen's Island University.

CROSSING THE ATLANTIC—1819.

It is often said that Lord Pirrie is a financier and not a shipbuilder, an organizer of combines rather than an engineer. Lady Harland used to say to me, "My husband builds the ships, but Mr. Pirrie gets the orders for them." It was not always easy to get the orders, for competition was fierce, and there were lean years when the shipyards were not busy. But Pirrie's persuasive powers were irresistible. One day on the Liverpool Exchange a shipowner was seen looking very melancholy. "What is the matter?" asked a friend. "Pirrie," he replied, "has just persuaded me to order a ship, and I don't know what the deuce I'll do with it."



CROSSING THE ATLANTIC—1919.
THE "LAURENTIC"—WHITE STAR LINE.

His business acumen was masked by a genial simplicity and smiling *naïveté* that some superficial observers mistook for softness and innocence. No clever man ever looked less clever than this homely little Ulsterman with the Belfast accent and the rustic manner. His simplicity conceals an amazing shrewdness of foresight and an extraordinary capacity for maturing gigantic plans without arousing the competitive alarm of the keenest business men in the shipping world.

One of Lord Pirrie's maxims is this: "An ounce of pluck is worth a ton of luck," and on one occasion he said to the Kaiser, "Sir, I do not fear your competition." He regards the Japanese as being more serious rivals than the Germans. Ten years ago he predicted that the Japanese would capture the great shipping routes in the Far East. But he is not afraid of their very proper and friendly commercial competition. He welcomes it. He thinks it will stimulate enterprise. His is an up-to-date mind. He holds fast to his lifelong policy of scrapping old machinery as soon as possible and—selling it to his competitors. He has always been a great traveller, and he keeps abreast of developments in the United States. He believes that if the United States were to adopt Free Trade

it would be the greatest peril our shipbuilding industry could have to confront. If they were to allow material for shipbuilding to enter duty free, he would not hesitate to establish branch shipyards in the United States! But the shortage of world tonnage caused by the ravages of the submarines and the mine will keep all the yards of the world busy for a long time, and there is no reason why Britain should not rapidly regain her supreme position in shipping and shipbuilding.

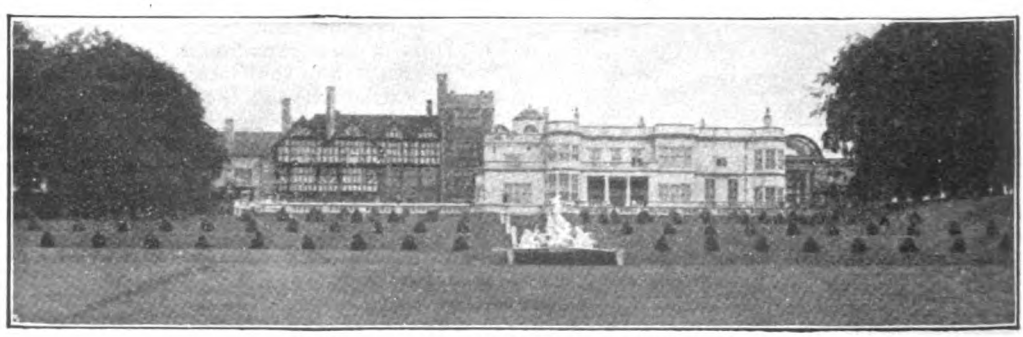
In addition to being chairman of Harland and Wolff, Lord Pirrie is a director of the International Mercantile Marine Company, the Ocean Transport Company, the White Star Line, the Wilson Line, the Furness-Leyland Line, the African Steamship Company, the British and North Atlantic Steam Navigation Company, the Mississippi and Dominion Steamship Company, the London and South-Western Railway Company, the Eastern Telegraph Company, the London City and Midland Bank, and the Scottish Widows' Fund. He is on countless committees, commissions, and councils. How he finds time to sit on all his boards and committees is an insoluble mystery, but it is a matter of cold system, time-planning, and ruthless concentration. I do not suppose that he himself knows how much his time is worth per second. Nevertheless, he does not deem himself to be overworked. As he sat at his clean, clear desk, an easy master of his manifold responsibilities, without any affectation he commiserated me upon the laborious nature of my work as a journalist.

"You must find it very tiring and wearing," he said to me, as if he were the idlest and most indolent of hedonists.

"I am a Lotus Eater compared with you!" I replied. "A life like yours would kill me in a week."

In some respects Lord Pirrie's features resemble those of the late Andrew Carnegie. But they are not quite so rocky and granitic. There is a softness of outline which makes his face a little more humanly sympathetic. The manipulation of titanic corporations and "communities of interests" has not hardened and hammered his countenance into the mask of iron will that is frequently seen in the masters of industry and finance. It may not be fanciful to suggest that the survival of the human boy in him is largely due to the inseparable companionship of his wife. He has not the lonely look of the typical millionaire. He preserves his youthful gaiety and elasticity, and he strikes me as being that rarest of human beings, a happy magnate. I know it is a kind of blasphemy to say that happiness is compatible with wealth, but happiness bubbles out of him, and it is evident that in some way or other he has achieved that simplification of life which is the foundation of happiness. His character is not in the least complex. It is as simple as an Ulster farmer's. He is content to live one life, and although it is strenuous, it is straight and strong in its harmony.

And it strikes me that the secret of his astonishing achievement in business is simplification. His is a simplifying mind, a unifying intellect. The need of our complex modern civilization is simplifying energy. The problems which vex us are all problems in simplification, or, to put it in another way, our society suffers from the mass of frictions produced by its failure to adapt itself to changing conditions. Some of these frictions are purely physical; others are purely moral. But the smooth and orderly evolution of society depends upon the elimination of these frictions, physical and moral, by a process of simplification. It is not easy to persuade politicians to work with the rare minds who possess the simplifying genius, and very few politicians are endowed with it. But if we are to solve our industrial, financial, and social problems we must enlist the simplifying genius of men like Lord Pirrie.



WITLEY PARK, LORD PIRRIE'S SURREY HOME.

MACKURD:
A tale of the Aftermath

by Bertram Atkey

Illustrated by C. Clark, R.I.

THE man whose card had announced that he was Major John MacKurd, V.C., finished speaking, leaned back in his chair, lit another cigarette, and smilingly awaited the reply of the big banker.

There was nothing in his easy, well-bred attitude to suggest that the proposal he had just made was not quite an ordinary everyday proposal.

But Sir David Glende for a full minute sat speechless, as with surprise, staring very closely at Major MacKurd, who bore the scrutiny of the keen grey eyes with the smiling and invincible tranquillity which appeared never to desert him.

Presently the banker spoke, slowly and very clearly.

"Major MacKurd," he said, "I beg your pardon. I fear I have been guilty of—er—inattention. It is not a customary fault of mine. I think that—quite inadvertently—I must have missed a part of your proposal. Do me the favour to restate it. This time I promise you my whole attention."

Major MacKurd, V.C., nodded cheerily.

"Not at all, sir, not the least little bit in the world, I assure you," he said. "I'll run over it all again with pleasure. I made it a bit brief as I didn't want to bore you. Hate making myself a nuisance."

He carefully readjusted the flesh-coloured patch over his right eye. Then, resuming his cigarette, he fixed his left eye upon the banker.

"It's like this, don't you know—they've rather slung me out of the Army—unfit—one-eyed, wooden foot, and that sort of thing—not to mention the Buzz—and I'm knockin' about loose. Nothing much to do. That quite clear, sir?"

Sir David nodded gravely. He was thinking of his son, reported "Missing, believed killed," and of how oddly this airy stranger reminded him of the boy, but he was able to reassure his visitor that so far he understood the position.

"Of course, there's a bit of pension attached to it—naturally, what?—but I've been rather plotting it out, when the Buzz will let me, and I've about come to the conclusion that it would be a soundish notion to come down into the City."

"Yes?" Sir David nodded, his eyes fast on the three deep vertical wrinkles, only partly concealed by the elastic band of the eye-patch, that seemed permanent on the brow of the V.C. "Quite so. May I ask what is the Buzz?"

"Certainly. It's nothing much, though. It's a soft, thick, cobwebby sort of a buzz in my head. Nothing much—it comes and goes, you know. You know those very soft woolly shawls that one's mother used to wear—that sort of thing—sky-blue. Well, if you wrapped your brain up in one of those and it had a bumble-bee entangled in it buzzing very softly—that's about the idea. Nothing much—but awkward for thinking sometimes, that's all."

The banker nodded again.

"I decided to come into the City, and settle down to finance, what?" continued Major MacKurd. "I've got a—a—*flair* for finance. So I strolled down this morning and noticing this bank the idea came into my head at once. I remembered a pal of mine out there told me once that the banks were frightfully short of bank-clerks, cashiers, and so on—and, as I say, sir, it came to me like a flash to get a position as a cashier, to start with. So I looked in."

He inhaled a mighty lungful of smoke, smiled winningly at the banker, and readjusted his eye-patch again.

"The damned thing's about two sizes too large—keeps slipping, what?" he said, so casually that the profanity was obviously inadvertent and unconscious.

"Cashier, yes. I'm a bit of a dab at arithmetic—bar decimals; never saw much point in decimals, did you, sir?—and, apart from arithmetic, which I suppose doesn't much matter nowadays with these adding machines and all that sort of thing, I like handling bank-notes. Queer, that, don't you think, sir? But it's a

fact. I love the rustly, silky little beggars—fivers and tenners!"

He hesitated a moment, then, smiling broadly, continued:—

"You've been awfully kind and patient, sir, and I ought to explain, in common honesty, that there's just a chance when the Buzz is on that I might take a few notes home at night to fool about with—making 'em rustle, don't you know—but naturally I shouldn't expect you to be a loser, what? What I mean, of course, is, that I should have to insist on refunding anything you missed or lost through my little peculiarity."

He paused a moment to light another cigarette.

"Salary, of course, I leave to you, sir," he said, politely. "It's experience I'm after, to tell you the truth."

He ceased with an air of having said all that was necessary.

"That's about the scheme I've plotted out," he added; "what do you think of it, sir?"

He waited, surveying with obvious pride the highly-polished brown boot that fitted with such inhumanly immaculate and creaseless perfection over the device of aluminium which he had playfully described as his "wooden foot." He moved it from side to side, smiling.

But Sir David Glende did not smile.

He thought for a long time before he spoke. When at last he replied, the tone of his voice would have surprised those who called him hard—and they were many—and the lines of his grim old face were oddly relaxed.

"Forgive me, Major MacKurd, if I ask you a few personal questions," he said.

"Fire away, sir," replied the smiling V.C.

"How old are you?"

"Twenty-six."

"What decorations have you?"

"Oh, I've been one of the lucky ones—V.C., you know, M.C., and a French decoration—Croix de Guerre."

"Twenty-six years old," said Sir David, absently.

"Twenty-six, yes. Hope you don't think that's too old to start in the City, sir?"

"No, no—not at all," said the banker, hurriedly.

He appeared to ponder. Once his hand moved towards his breast-pocket, but stopped.

"You have been in many actions, Major MacKurd? In many places?"

"Heaps of 'em," said the Major, cheerfully. "Rotten things they are, too."

"Did you ever, by any chance, come across a young officer—a lieutenant named Glende—David Glende? He was reported missing after Passchendaele."

Major MacKurd, V.C., reflected, frowning slightly.

"I can't quite recall him—not with the Buzz on," he said. "I fancy I—Glende? Glende?" He smiled apologetically. "One meets such a crowd of men, you know. And the Buzz is rather bad to-day. I'll just make a note of the name and let you know. If I've met him I shall remember it when the Buzz is off. Was he a friend of yours, sir?"

"My only son," said Sir David, very steadily.

Major MacKurd, V.C., said nothing at all to that—only moved one hand very slightly in a quite indescribable gesture, and raised one shoulder the fraction of an inch. But they were the most eloquent movements Sir David Glende had ever seen. They expressed everything—a sense of the pain, the desolation, the waste, the needlessness, the pity, the tragic folly, and the fatalist's acceptance of it all. Only a man who had experienced it all many times could have made those tiny gestures in just that way.

Presently he spoke.

"I wish I could remember him, sir. Perhaps, when the Buzz is off——"

"Yes, yes. Take this card—it will keep the name in your mind—if you have no objection."

Sir David passed a visiting-card, which the Major pocketed.

"Now with regard to the position of cashier," said the banker. "I have not complete control of this bank, as you will easily realize. There are partners—fellow-directors—to consult, and an immediate decision is impossible. You understand my position? But I may tell you at once, Major MacKurd, that your proposal impresses me very much and I shall lose no time in going into the matter. Is that satisfactory to you?"

The V.C. smiled.

"Why, naturally. There's no hurry."

"I expect to write to you almost immediately—and I may go so far as to say that I hope to be able in any case to make you a proposal. I shall need your address, of course."

MacKurd, V.C., gave it—a West-end hotel. He was quite "loose," he said—"campin' just anywhere."

"And I should be very glad, Major, if you can find time to lunch with me to-day."

"Pleasure, sir."

"Shall we say one o'clock?"

"Couldn't be better. I'll drop in for you at one, sir. I've got a bit of shopping to do and it will fit in beautifully, what?"

So it was settled.

Sir David accompanied his visitor to the big doors of the bank—and that was an event which the staff discussed throughout the luncheon hour.

"He said he had a proposal to make to the owner of the bank," mused Mr. Wilson, the chief clerk. "It must have been a proposal of the very greatest importance—something unique, I fancy."

And that was true—though it was not the kind of uniqueness which Mr. Wilson meant.

The old Chief Clerk realized that when presently Sir David sent for him.

"You are pretty good at deciphering handwriting, I believe, Wilson," said the banker.

The Chief Clerk, an old ally and henchman of Sir David, smiled a little.

"I should be, Sir David," he admitted.

"Can you read me the line in that letter which is marked with a red cross?" He passed a letter, folded very narrow so that only a few lines were visible.

"It is Mr. David's writing," said Wilson, and read aloud: —

"'*His name is*'—ah! poor Mr. David wrote this in a hurry, sir—h'm!——" Mr. Wilson stared at the sentence intently for a moment, then decided.

"'*His name is Claskind*'—yes, undoubtedly 'Claskind.' An unusual name, sir."

Mr. Wilson handed back the letter.

"Thank you, Wilson. 'Claskind'—yes, I had decided on 'Claskind' myself."

Sir David turned to his writing-table again and the Chief Clerk went out quietly.

Then Sir David unfolded the letter again and read it throughout—and reread it.

Presently he took a pen and a clean sheet of paper, and wrote busily, constantly referring to the letter spread out before him. At the end of a quarter of an hour he had written the words 'Claskind' and 'MacKurd' dozens of times in as many different handwritings as he could accomplish. He surveyed his work for a few seconds, then shook his head ruefully.

"Ah, Davie, boy," he said, "is it 'Claskind'? or have you made 'Claskind' out of 'MacKurd'? It seems impossible, but out there—as you say——" He turned to the end of the letter and read aloud:—

"Forgive the scrawl, father, but I'm writing with shells joggling my elbow, so to speak—Jerry's evening strafe—and time's short."

The banker muttered the last words softly.

"'Time's short.'"

The old man stiffened abruptly, compressed

"TWENTY-SIX, YES. HOPE YOU DON'T THINK THAT'S TOO OLD TO START IN THE CITY, SIR?"

his lips, put all away, and stared blankly before him, thinking.

At last he rose.

"It's impossible to make him a cashier—although he's 'rather a dab at arithmetic.'" A faint smile twitched his lips. "We can't have unknown quantities of notes sleeping out of the bank at any odd moment the fit takes him. It's impossible. And yet I have an instinct that he's the man who saved Davie from that terrible thing. I shall do something for him—whether my instinct is right or wrong. *That*, at least."

His lips twitched again, as he thought of Major MacKurd's airy proposal.

But as he took his hat his face grew very serious, for his mind harked back yet once more to Davie's letter—to the few phrases that were burnt in on the father's mind.

"*He saved me from myself, father. I was in a blue funk—in another minute my nerve would have gone and I should have bolted. My God, think of it, father!—'bolted'—in front of my own men. He came like an angel from heaven—I mean that absolutely—as cool, as steady, as self-possessed as steel. How I envied him. He spotted my trouble in a flash. 'It's pretty hard when it gets a claw into you, eh?' he said. 'I was that way at Ypres. Most fellows are—once—you know.' We talked for a few minutes and presently I went right—with a click—as swiftly as a camera shutter. The relief of it! I was no longer afraid, father. I could have kissed his boots. He saw it and he laughed a little and nodded. 'It's gone?' he said. 'Quite,' I said. 'I shall never be able to repay you.' But he laughed and shook hands. 'My dear chap it's nothing! I had* MY *dose at Ypres. I'll be moving.' And soon after we went 'over,' and I was as right as rain. His name was Claskind—and I owe him far more than my life—far more, father——*"

Yes, it was burnt in on Sir David's mind, all that letter. And somewhere deep down in his heart there was established a wonderful instinct—developing momentarily to a conviction—that the hastily-scrawled "Claskind" stood for "MacKurd."

"CAN YOU READ ME THE LINE IN THAT LETTER WHICH IS MARKED WITH A RED CROSS?"

The clock struck one while Sir David pondered the thing, slowly pacing his room—one and two and three o'clock, but Major MacKurd, V.C., did not return.

"It is the Buzz—he's forgotten the appointment," said the banker, rigorously controlling himself. It was the bitterest disappointment he had ever known.

"I was wrong to let him go—in that state. The folly of it!"

He touched a bell and ordered his car.

But MacKurd, V.C., was not at his hotel, and nobody there appeared to know when he would return.

Sir David went back to his bank and wrote a letter. The clock struck four as he signed it.

Then he went to lunch—what time MacKurd, V.C., drifted to quiet harbourage in an ornate West-end *chemin-de-fer* den, started on his second bottle of champagne, and broke into the third hundred pounds of his financial reserve. The Buzz was rather bad that day, and he had an idea that a little champagne and a little relaxation were good for it.

The other matter, his City enterprise, had quite slipped his mind.

II.

BUT at eleven o'clock the next morning MacKurd, V.C., opened and read the following letter from Sir David Glende :—

" *I have thought a great deal about your proposal, and I am very glad to be able to say that I have a plan to propose which, I think, will render it unnecessary for you to go through the drudgery of a cashier's work at this bank in order to acquire financial experience. For some time past I have found myself increasingly in need of another private secretary at my home, and I am very glad indeed to be able to invite your acceptance of the position. The actual work will not be excessive, but it will, as my arrangements for the future develop, become more and more important and confidential. The salary I suggest is one thousand pounds a year, and I must stipulate that you live at my house. I can promise, I think, that you will have, in this position, opportunities of acquiring an experience of finance which might not be easily available to you in any other position.*

' I trust, my dear Major MacKurd, to have the pleasure of receiving your acceptance verbally from you, and hope that you will find it convenient to call and see me at the bank to-day.

" *Yours very sincerely,*

" DAVID ROSS GLENDE.'

MacKurd put the letter down and surveyed the smoke of his cigarette as it curled ceilingwards.

The Buzz was rather pronounced this morning —also his brain seemed queer—shaky—quivering steadily, like heat-waves.

But he realized that this was an extremely kind letter.

" He's a decent old boy and I'll give it a bit of a trial, what ? " said MacKurd. " I'm not so keen on it as I fancied—but, hang it all ! it's a chance to learn how to run banks, form fours—no, companies—ha ! ha ! Promote 'em, what ? Promoted plenty of men in my time—promote companies now. Not too bad, what ? First shot ! Hang this Buzz ! "

He touched his bell and ordered a bottle of champagne.

It occurred to him to look at his bank-book before he left the hotel. A little figuring showed him that he had precisely five pounds left with which to carry on. The cheque he had written overnight at the *chemin-de-fer* den had reduced him to that.

When, presently, he stepped into the taxi which was to take him down to the City the Buzz was no more than a faint, far, tiny drone. He had seen to that. He was a little pale, but one watching him would never have dreamed that MacKurd, V.C., was a nervous wreck, flying at a fearful speed upon a swift, golden stream of champagne to the rapids of insanity and the deep falls of death.

It never occurred to him that the offer of the old banker was anything unusual—that, viewed as a purely business transaction, Sir David had been liberal to the point of absurdity. Had some truth-teller, with a heart of marble, arisen and told MacKurd, V.C., that his value in the market as a secretary to a financial magnate was not a thousand a year and a luxurious home, but literally *nil*, the V.C. would have laughed, jokingly called the truth-teller a pessimist, and suggested a small bottle.

Sir David Glende was on the point of going to lunch when MacKurd, V.C., reached the bank.

The banker's face lighted up a little as he saw that, this time, the Major had kept the appointment.

They shook hands, and without embarrassment MacKurd asked the banker to pay the taxi-driver.

" So you have decided to accept my proposal ? I am very glad—very glad," said Sir David. " You won't mind living mainly in the country?"

MacKurd smiled rather vaguely, for the Buzz was bothering him.

" Certainly not—as long as there's plenty of champagne, what ? " he said.

" You are fond of champagne ? " asked Sir David, steadily.

" Not especially—for myself, you understand. But it keeps the Buzz quiet. Somebody suggested morphia last night, but I don't fancy that morphia's got quite the kick of champagne, do you, sir ? "

The banker appeared to ponder.

" No, I should say not. I think you will do better to stick to champagne. I think there may be a medical friend of mine lunching with us." (He had arranged that.) " Suppose we put the question to him ? "

" Sound scheme, sir—very, what ? " said the V.C. secretary.

III.

ON an evening about six weeks later Sir David Glende was sitting in his library with an old friend—the local practitioner in the village whereof the banker was the modern equivalent of the old-time squire—largely the owner, that is. Dr. Owen Fansley and Sir David had played a round of golf that afternoon, dined together, and had come to the big, cool library for a chat and a game of chess.

They had been there some hours already, sitting by the open window, staring out at the grey velvet twilight of the midsummer evening, but their conversation was still earnest, and the set of chessmen stood neglected on the table close by.

" The matter is worrying me more and more, Fansley," said the old banker. " It is all going wrong—wrong. I know it, I see it—anyone could see it. The man is headed straight for insanity and death. There are ugly words for some of the things he has done—and few men would hesitate to use them. I suppose I am

soft—weak. That is not my reputation, either—but I suppose the hardest man has somewhere in him a soft spot—a weak link."

He paused, musing, staring out across the shadowy park.

Then he spoke abruptly.

"You have had to do with a side of human nature which is not very familiar to me, Fansley," he said. "Advise me. What am I to do about MacKurd?"

The old doctor moved his head, in a gesture which deprecated urgency.

"You must tell me more of the peculiarities and eccentricities of which you complain before I can suggest anything, David," he said.

Sir David nodded.

"Yes, of course. Well, you know him—and you know that he is not normal."

"Far from it," said the doctor, gravely.

"And it is possible that he is seriously—deranged?" There was a question in the banker's tone.

"Well—let us leave that open for a little. Go on."

Sir David hesitated a moment, then spoke abruptly.

"The fact is I'm afraid he is devoid of common honesty!"

"Ah! But I thought he warned you of that?"

Sir David shook his head.

"No. He told me that he might take bank-notes—not *as* money but as—er—toys! Because they fascinated him. He was very precise and insistent about returning them. He meant it, too. I am quite sure of that. He meant it—*then*, at any rate. He appeared to regard it as amusing—in the way a truly humorous thing is amusing, not as that which is cynical or sardonic may be amusing. I am quite convinced of that. Let us leave that for a moment. He drinks enormously—champagne—though during the last week he has been drinking brandy with it. He adds champagne to a stiff brandy as one adds water to whisky. But he is never drunk—he never gives the minutest sign that he has touched alcohol. That is—frightening, Fansley. And he gambles with the wild magnificence of one insane. I have accompanied him twice to evil, discreet dens in the West-end, and I have had almost to pinch myself to be sure that I was not dreaming. He is incredibly unreliable. You know, my idea was to give him a sinecure—to ride about the place, amusing himself with the supervision of the shooting, the rearing of the game, such as the war has left us with, the trout, the farm, reconstructing the golf course—and landscape gardening—anything, a free hand, and, practically, *carte blanche*. Was that difficult?" There was an odd, unexpected quaver in the banker's voice. "Was there anything in that which any sane man with the instincts of a gentleman such as MacKurd obviously has been could find onerous or irksome? Yet this wild-man has failed to keep within even such bounds. Bounds, do I say? Why, there were *no* bounds—in all human reason. I have made him free of all I have—except only that I cannot bring myself to let him meet Madeline. That is the real reason why she has been in Scotland for the last six weeks."

Sir David paused, breathless, for a second. Then, dropping his voice, he said: "Owen, listen to this! MacKurd has thrown away eleven thousand pounds of my money in the last six weeks—and I find to-night that he has——"

He stopped short as the door opened and MacKurd, V.C., looked in.

"Are you engaged, Sir David? Shall I switch on the light?" he asked, in his pleasant voice.

"No, no—switch on, do."

The bunches of electric bulbs on the carved ceiling and panelled walls glowed softly, revealing MacKurd in evening dress under a magnificent fur coat, at the door.

"I am sorry to interrupt, but if you are not using the big car to-night, sir, I had rather plotted out a little run up to town."

There was a brief silence. Then the banker cleared his throat.

"Very well, my boy," he said.

"Thanks very much, sir."

MacKurd half turned, then stopped.

"Oh, by the way, I'd quite forgotten. I owe you five hundred of the best, sir. I ran out in town yesterday; you were down here and it was rather awkward. So I wrote a cheque, signed it for you and cashed it at the bank. Rather sound scheme, what?" He laughed pleasantly, said "Good-night," and went.

Sir David looked at the doctor, his lips trembling and his eyes full of misery.

Fansley had flushed slightly, half rising from his chair.

"Oh, but this is absurd——" he began, restrained himself, and sat again.

"You see? That is what I was going to tell you! And how can one call it forgery? He must be mad!" said the banker.

"Mad? No. I have examined him—how many times? I will stake my reputation that he is sane!" exclaimed the medical man.

He waited, but Sir David said no more.

"Why do you permit it? Has he a hold on you?" asked Fansley.

"Yes."

"It is a strangle-hold! Are you being blackmailed?"

"God forbid! No—I give. Freely I give. It's not the actual money I mind, God knows——"

"Why do you give?"

Sir David took from his pocket the letter in which his dead son spoke of "Claskind."

"Perhaps I am wrong—an old fool," he said, humbly. "But this is one of the reasons I want to befriend MacKurd."

He told the doctor the story of Davie, read him the letter, and explained his singular fancy that Claskind and MacKurd were the same man.

Long before he had finished the doctor's face had cleared, and when the old banker had said his last word and was returning Davie's letter to his pocket, he leaned forward, speaking

briskly, with the air of one who would finish the matter forthright.

"He, MacKurd, does not remember Davie—or any occasion upon which he encouraged or steadied him?"

"No. He says so frankly. I have often asked him. But his memory is appalling!"

"Nevertheless it is highly improbable that he was the man who befriended poor Davie. Why—what real grounds are there for believing he was? He is of a different regiment——"

"But both were in action at Davie's first battle!"

"True—and many others, David. Let me go on. The fault is with you—no, not in any personal sense—I mean, your health—— Listen. You came very near a breakdown during the war—nearer than you suspect. Only I—whose duty it is to know—know how near. This man—this feather-headed adventurer—came upon you in a moment of reaction—and the idea that he was the man Davie meant lodged itself in your mind—like a seed in a crevice upon a cliff-face. You did not dislodge it—on the other hand you welcomed it. One easily understands that you would welcome it. It is natural that you should. Also there is no doubt that MacKurd, in spite of his fatuous irresponsibility, is a man of singular personal charm. A nice boy prematurely aged, who has suffered horribly for a long time. So the seed rooted—and so it is just that much more difficult to dislodge. Confess it, David—you look upon MacKurd very much as one might look upon a son of whom one could be proud were he not so—wild?"

The grey head of the old banker drooped.

"Yes, that is so."

Fansley nodded slightly, and continued:—

"But, you see, David, that you are doing him no good—indeed, you are giving him the means to do himself harm. He will throw away all you give him—all you allow him to take—to his own detriment. He needs discipline, not indulgence."

He pondered a little.

"You can't send a man to hospital because he drinks too much champagne to lull a buzzing in the head, which a period of peacefulness in country-side silences, fresh air, wholesome food, exercise, and lots of sleep, will cure. You can't put a man in a nursing-home because he gambles and signs another man's name to cheques to pay his losses. You can only discipline him."

"You may as well speak of disciplining a butterfly, my dear Owen," said the banker. "He is utterly irresponsible."

"Why?" asked Fansley. "You don't know. I will tell you. He is as he is because he is aimless—without an objective. He needs nothing. He is striving for nothing. Sex, you say, means nothing to him, and he is not susceptible to feminine charm or influence—but, wisely, you do not wish your daughter to meet him. Money he has in plenty—thanks to you—and everything else."

The doctor leaned forward, putting his hand on the other's arm.

"David, old friend, you must harden your heart if you are going to prove a real friend to this man," he said.

"But—what am I to do? I still believe he is the man Davie wrote of. Am I to turn him out—penniless, save for his pension? Why, he would be in prison before a month was up."

"Better a prison ward from which there is an exit than that *cul-de-sac* the grave," said the doctor.

The banker drew a sharp breath.

"My God!—a man who has fought so—for us, who sat snugly at home and took the profits that were literally thrown at us! A man who had been torn apart with hot metal—as he has—as so many have! Aren't there any proper places for such cases, in the England they paid flesh and blood and sanity and souls to guard?"

"His health is excellent," said the doctor, inexorably truthful. "His Buzz would die out in a month of sane living. He——"

A muffled telephone-bell rippled gently on the big writing-desk. Sir David answered abstractedly, but that was only for a second. A sudden flush burnt on his thin face; and he spoke sharply.

The doctor watched him, not without affection. They were old cronies, these two. Perhaps it was that which rendered the medical man harsher in his judgment of MacKurd than he might have been had Sir David been an ordinary client.

The Sir David of private life had disappeared now, though—it was Glende, the money-captain, that shrewd, keen, skilled navigator on the treacherous sea of finance, who was speaking at the telephone now—clearly, incisively.

"I am grateful that you have notified me without delay. Yes, bring him as quickly as possible. Ignore expense, please. Are there preparations of any nature for his reception which you require to be made here? I have a medical man—a personal friend—here with me now, and he will remain."

He was speaking with an iron control over his voice—but Fansley saw that the hand gripping the receiver was shaking.

"Very good. I shall be ready for you. Thank you. Good-bye."

He replaced the receiver and turned to his friend. He was stone pale now. He sat down, resting his elbows on his knees and his head on his hands.

"Oh, God!—please—*please*——" he muttered, brokenly.

Fansley sat silent, watching him but leaving him alone.

Through the warm velvet darkness outside there swam the low thrumming of a high-powered motor, like the deep soft boom of a bee. A great aura of white light from that car's lamps was swinging through the night towards the house. A thought struck the doctor, and he went quietly to the open casement, listening. It seemed to him that the note of the car was familiar to him.

"That's Madeline's car—surely!" he half-whispered. The sound died down and the

"YES, BRING HIM AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. I HAVE A MEDICAL MAN—A PERSONAL FRIEND—HERE WITH ME NOW, AND HE WILL REMAIN."

white blaze dropped. The car was running down the dip before breasting the steep hill that led to the entrance-gates.

Fansley listened.

Deep in the heart of the drowsy gloom far back in the wood a nightingale was singing, and its notes lay upon the beauty of the night like pearls upon a black and glossy cloak. Accustomed though he was to the country-side night, yet this night, he felt, was pregnant with the promise of events. It was as though somewhere out in the great warm darkness the Fates were stirring—Life, with her wide, vivid eyes, her laughing lips, bedecked with flowers; Love, with her flushed face, her swimming gaze, her white hands; and, perhaps, Death, too, sombre, wreathed with nightshade, darkling and sorrowful, moved mysteriously, hesitant, gazing towards the house.

Then the fierce shout of an electric horn

shattered the spell, and Fansley turned back to his friend.

The old banker had recovered himself now. He stared at the doctor.

"Owen," he said, "they have telephoned to say that they are bringing a man here to-night—at once—who is a returned prisoner of war. He is young and unwounded—but he has lost his memory utterly. He has never spoken of his life previous to his capture by the Germans, dazed, shell-shocked, in the rags of what was once an officer's uniform, at Passchendaele. To-day, for the first time, he mentioned a name—apropos of nothing, it seems. He uttered my name three times. Nothing more, but the nurse reported it. The doctor—a man I know slightly—happened to know that my son was reported 'Missing—believed killed' at Passchendaele—and he has suggested bringing him to see me at the earliest moment. And they are now on the way! *And it may be Davie!*"

Without speaking, Fansley caught both his friend's hands in his and wrung them hard.

"Thank you, old friend," said Sir David. He stared out into the night, his lips moving.

The whirring boom of the approaching car waxed louder as the machine came up over the hill. Fansley watched the white glare and saw that the car had turned in at the lodge gates. It was coming to the house.

"Yes, it's Madeline," he said to himself. "This is ordained." For he knew that Sir David had not expected his daughter home from Scotland for a month yet. But he was not surprised. It seemed to him that this night was not to be as other nights. The workings of Fate were more visible, he thought—the spinning of one infinitesimal fragment of the great universal fabric was plainer to be seen—though how it would finish it was impossible to say. There was to be a climax there, that night, he was sure of that—the threads were coming to take their place in the design, the tiny specks were drawing near to their exact positions in the mosaic.

He nodded absently, wondering, with a nervous curiosity, whether the *dénouement* for which Fate was so plainly preparing was to be tragic or otherwise. He looked at his friend, the great financier, praying in his chair; he pictured that silent, broken, nerve-shattered man without a memory whom they were bringing even now; he considered, not without pity, MacKurd, V.C.—odd that he only should be absent; and lastly, he thought of Madeline. How fitting that she should come home, without warning though it was, this night.

The door opened and the girl came in quickly.

She still wore her thin summer motor wraps. They were white with the dust of a long journey. And her beautiful face was pale with fatigue and her dark eyes looked jet black within the shadows which weariness had painted round them.

Sir David looked up, staring.

"Why, Madeline—my dear little girl! Where have you sprung from? Never from Scotland to-day!"

She was pushing him back in his chair, caressing him.

"Yes, daddy dear, yes, yes, yes! With only one stop for lunch and one for petrol!"

"But why, my dear, why? Is anything wrong at Stanes?" He spoke of his Scotch estate where Madeline had been staying—partly, on Fansley's advice, to recuperate, after a spring chill, and partly as company for Sir David's sister, a semi-invalid, passionately fond of Scotland.

"All's well there and the place is lovely—but I had an impulse yesterday, daddy. Like a great wave—overwhelming. Something sent me here—if an actual living person had stood before me and said, 'Hurry home to your father, he is in need of you!' it could not have been clearer. I did not attempt to resist it. We started at the very peep o' dawn this morning—and oh, daddy, the new Sunbeam is such a good, honest little car. Thank you so much for her—she reeled off all those long miles like a dream, and Griffiths is such a splendid chauffeur: we drove in spells—and so—and so—here I am, and are you all right, dear? Is he all right, doctor?"

"Perfectly, Madeline, my dear child," said Fansley, with the privilege of an old, old friend—and one, moreover, who had attended her arrival into the world.

She settled on the arm of her father's chair, one hand on his shoulder.

"So my impulse meant just—nothing?"

Fansley smiled gravely.

"Oh, I shouldn't say that—yet," he answered. And they all turned abruptly as the door was opened rather violently.

Major MacKurd, V.C., had returned.

He stood upon the threshold, surveying them—deadly pale, his head heavily swathed in bandages, one hand bandaged and one lapel of his big fur collar half torn off. There was dried blood on the white front of his dress shirt, and a smear of blood on his face.

"Oh, I beg pardon," he said, dully. "I hadn't the remotest idea that you were engaged, sir—not the remotest, what?"

He would have gone with that, but Sir David stopped him.

"Why, what's happened, my boy? Don't go. Here's work for you, Fansley. Come in, Major. This is Madeline, my daughter—of whom I have spoken to you."

(But he had not spoken much of her, nor very often.)

Slowly MacKurd limped forward. He bowed, rather painfully, but his eyes clung to Madeline.

"I hope I don't look too much of a *blessé*," he said, painfully. "But we have had rather a spill. The Lanchester got badly ditched a few miles out—and I went through the screen, what? Grayson is all right—not a scratch. I was driving."

He was addressing them all—but he never moved his eyes from Madeline. She, too, was looking at him as she did not usually look at a stranger. As Fansley stepped forward to give a professional glance at the bandages a phrase

detached itself from the conversation of that evening, driving through his mind—

"He is not susceptible to feminine charm!"

But—he was looking at Madeline with a rapt scrutiny that was odd in one who was so impervious to feminine attraction.

"Who bandaged you, MacKurd?" he asked.

Even as he spoke a motor-horn brayed sharply down the drive—and Sir David turned quickly to the French window.

"Here they are, Fansley!" he said, and his voice cracked as, bareheaded, he disappeared into the darkness. But the stabbing glare of the lamps on the big ambulance car that came gliding up dazzled him and he stepped back with a stifled exclamation of impatience.

A little crowd appeared round the hospital car like magic, even as Fansley, using all his self-control against an impulse of fierce excitement that boiled up in his veins, slipped his arm through that of Sir David.

"Steady does it! Mind, now—*steady*, David, I say——"

Steady! But even his professional heart was racing.

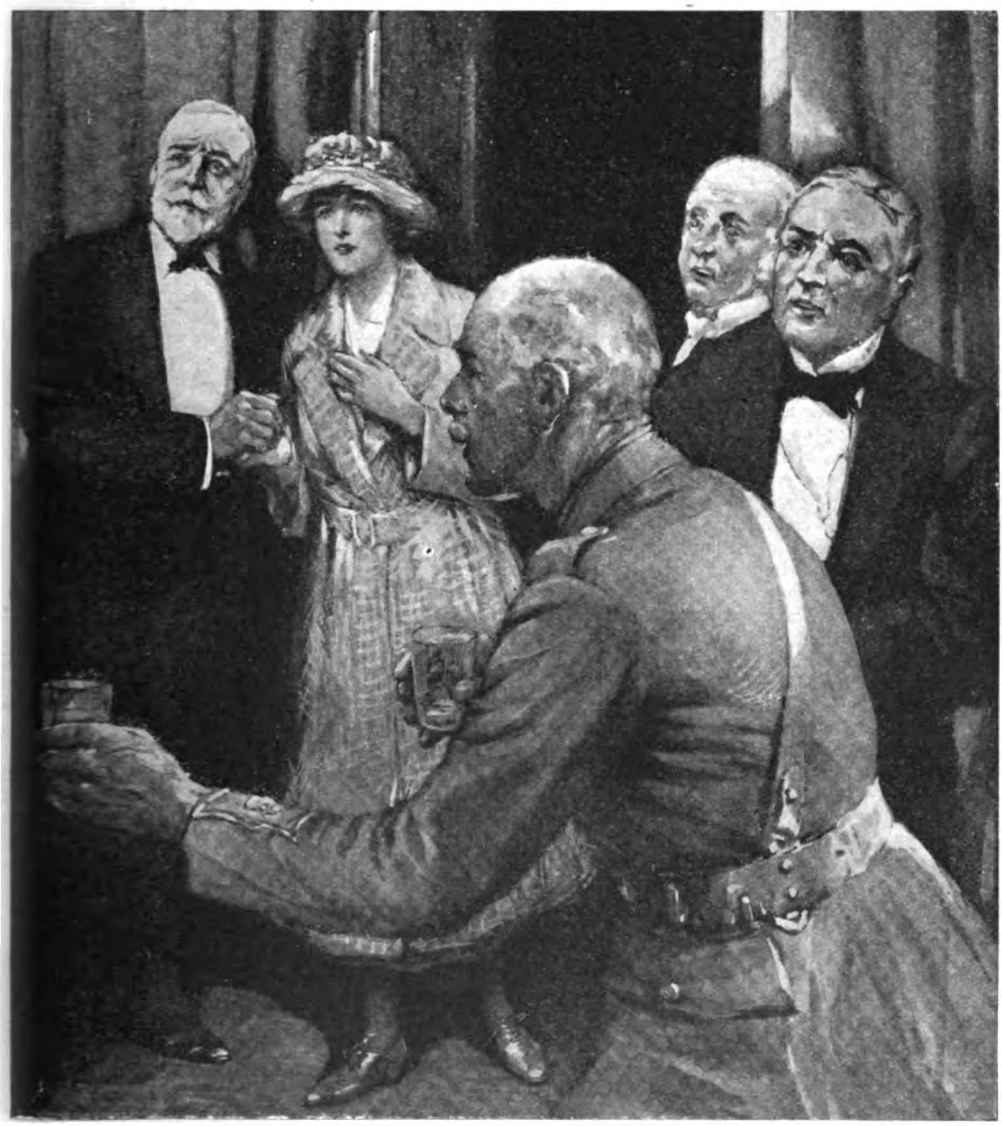
The butler and footmen who had been on the *qui vive* for the past hour fell back, making way for two men who came forward towards the open window

"MACKURD LAUGHED—A SHORT, HARSH CACKLE—AND BROUGHT HIS UNINJURED HAND DOWN BLOODSHOT EYES. 'WELL, OLD SON, SO

"This way," said Fansley, and stepped aside as they moved into the lighted room—two men in khaki, one an elderly, worn man, an R.A.M.C. Major, the other little more than a boy, but with

Sudden tears rolled down the face of the old banker, as he reached for the boy's hands.

"Ah, Davie, my boy — my boy!" he muttered, his lips quivering.



HEAVILY ON THE SHOULDER OF THE MEMORY-LESS BOY, STARING HARD AT HIM WITH GLEAMING, YOU GOT THROUGH, HEY, WHAT?'"

blank eyes and an old man's face. It was Davie!

He came forward, the hand of the doctor on his shoulder.

"Let me introduce you to Sir David Glende—Sir—David—Glende, your father, old man!" said the military doctor, very slowly and distinctly.

Politely, but without a gleam of recognition, the prematurely-aged boy saluted.

"How are you, sir?" he said.

"Just one moment, sir," broke in the military doctor, who had been whispering to Fansley, and turned the boy to his sister.

"Glende!" he said, with a certain sharpness in his voice. "this is Madeline—your sister!"

The boy bowed, looking puzzled.

The doctor tried again.

"Here is Dr. Fansley—an old friend of yours!" he said.

Again the polite, blank stare.

"Don't you remember us, Davie—Madeline

and your dad ? " begged the banker. " Davie—*try !* For God's sake, try ! And Fansley—who taught you golf."

Then it was that MacKurd, V.C., saw fit to lurch forward—a ghastly figure, bandaged, pale as death, a smear of blood down his dust-streaked face, his eyes glittering.

He laughed—a short, harsh cackle, and brought his uninjured hand down heavily on the shoulder of the memory-less boy, staring hard at him with gleaming, bloodshot eyes.

" Well, old son, so you got through, hey, what ? " he bawled, in a voice quite unlike that which he normally used. " Some show, what ? But the blighter's for it this time. He's on the run ! How's your nerve now, son ? And have you got a drink on you of any sort ? "

For a second they all fell back from him in a consternation that was akin to terror, for he looked like one mad—all save Davie.

He did not fall back. Instead, he punched, with a species of fey playfulness, at MacKurd's chest. And there was a sudden light in his eyes as he shouted back :—

" You ! *You*, is it, MacKurd ? Oh, good luck ! Drink ? No—I'm as dry as tinder ! "

For a moment they shouted strange, profane congratulations at each other—lamenting the lack of a drink. They looked horribly ill. That their tortured brains had tricked them into believing that they were meeting again after some " do," which was perhaps Davie's first battle, was self-evident. MacKurd was swaying on the edge of collapse.

Then the R.A.M.C. Major was inspired. He seized the decanter on a small stand near the chess table, poured two dazing doses of whisky, and pressed forward.

" Who said ' drinks ' ? Here you are, boys," he barked, and crammed the glasses into their hands.

They drank thirstily, and fumbled for cigarettes, talking swiftly as they fumbled.

With his eyes and a most expressive gesture the military doctor drew Sir David, Madeline, and Fansley with him out through the French window.

" Give them a little while ! " he said. " It may be only a few minutes ! What an amazing stroke of luck that that wild-looking chap was there ? Who is he ? "

" That is Major MacKurd, V.C.," said the banker, quickly, defensively. " He befriended Davie when he first went under fire—and Davie worships him."

" MacKurd, eh ? " said the Major. " What's he doing here ?—he should be in hospital."

" Ah, Major—his wounds are very recent——" Fansley came forward—" take a turn with me."

He slipped his arm through that of the R.A.M.C. Major and they paced up and down the lawn briskly, talking.

On the terrace just outside the French window Sir David and Madeline waited, holding hands like children—listening with a strained and painful intensity to the high-pitched voices inside the library.

" He will remember, dear—he will remember, dear—he will remember, dear——"

Madeline was saying it over and over again.

The voices were sinking to a more tranquil, everyday note. The listeners could no longer distinguish what was said. Their hand-grip tightened—and then, suddenly, they heard Davie's voice speaking naturally, with a ring of wild surprise.

" But—I say, you know, MacKurd, *I know this billet !* I—why, I'm hanged if it isn't my home ! *My home !* This is the library—at Netherby—my governor's room ! Why——"

The R.A.M.C. officer hurried up. He, too, had heard that cry of amazement.

" Quick ! Quick ! In you go ! " he said, and literally pushed Madeline and Sir David into the room.

" It's now or never ! " he snapped to Fansley.

And it was *now*.

" Father ! Madeline ! "

The cry cleaved through the room like the sabre-note of a strongly-bowed violin string. Never before had the boy uttered the words in quite that way before, never would he again. There was a strange, deep joy in it, amazement as swift as light, as poignant as pain, with gratitude, relief, triumph. It was the cry of a slave who wakes to freedom from a sleep begun in bondage.

He went to his people with open arms and shining eyes.

" Then I *am* home—truly home again ? " he said.

" Ah, yes—home again, Davie ! "

The banker gripped his son's hands—so that it was Madeline who hurried with a cry of pity to MacKurd, V.C., who had fallen back on the big lounge, with a long, curious sigh.

Fansley went quickly to him. The R.A.M.C. Major was watching Davie with a little smile of satisfaction on his lips.

" Is he——" asked Madeline, hesitating.

" Oh, no—it's just a faint. He's not fit yet—but he will be all right," said the doctor.

Madeline leaned close to whisper.

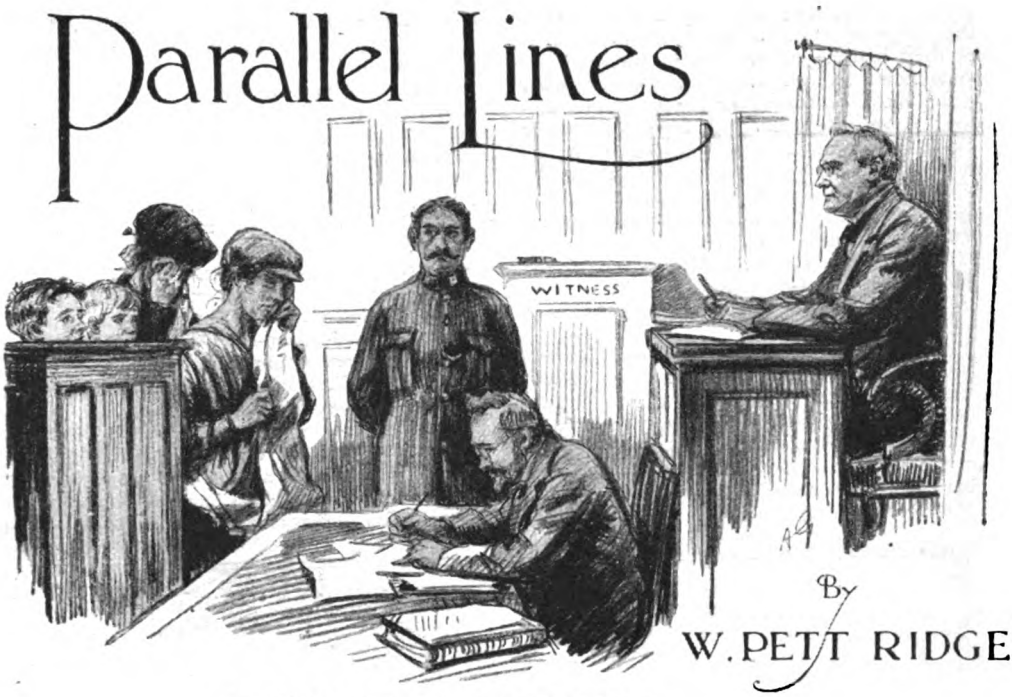
" Make him well, doctor, oh, be sure to make him well ! " she breathed. " He has done so much for us all—did you hear father say he befriended Davie ?. And now he has restored his memory ! "

" I will, my dear," said Fansley, with singular confidence. " And I think—I *think*—you will find that Davie has restored something to MacKurd ! "

And, before the week was past, they knew that it was indeed so. The culminating excitement of Davie's arrival, following the shock of the motor accident, had straightened out that odd little twist in the mind of the V.C. which inspired the erratic wildness characterizing him before that evening.

They did not learn that at once—but when, many months later, Sir David Glende gave his daughter into the care of MacKurd, it was without any doubt or fear of the future that he did so. For, even as Davie had come back to his own home and his own memory again, so MacKurd, V.C., had come back to his own manhood. And the Buzz was utterly gone.

Parallel Lines



By W. PETT RIDGE

ILLUSTRATED BY A. GARRATT

THE magistrate pulled his chair forward when the last witness had given her evidence. Before him stood on tip-toe two small boys, clearly anxious to see, and not averse to being seen. Two mothers near had corner of apron at eyes; their tweed-capped heads trembled.

"I do not know," said the magistrate, in deliberate tones, "I really do not know what London children are coming to. The behaviour of the youngsters now before me carries mischief to a point where it takes leave of sanity. On the causes of this deplorable behaviour I can but speculate. Whether it is the absence of fathers, now occupied in the country's interests abroad, and on the side of the parents left at home either gross carelessness, or mental incapacity——"

The mothers, not quite certain of the intention of the words, but feeling that they conveyed little in the shape of compliment, moaned a protest. The usher called for order.

"——or," the magistrate went on, "whether there is in our system of education a woeful deficiency, it is not for me to say. But this, at any rate, is clear. My memory of London goes back to over forty years ago, and I speak of what I know. And I do declare, with all the emphasis the situation requires, that the present state of affairs, so far as the deportment of boys is concerned, is absolutely unprecedented."

An official entered from a side-door, and whispered deferentially. His Worship would excuse the interruption, but a gentleman, bringing the card produced, desired to speak to his Worship for just one minute.

"I will give my decision in this case," said the magistrate, rising briskly from his comfortable chair, "after lunch."

In the room at the back of the court there ensued a handshaking that promised to last through the whole of the interval; the ejaculations which occur when friends meet after a long period; then expressions of delight at the encounter, followed by inquiries. "Well, and how are you, Henry?" and, "You're looking awfully well, Charles," and attempts to fix the exact time when they had last met. The visitor, it seemed, was but passing through London; he had called at his friend's club, where the hall-porter recommended that the police-court should be tried.

"Henry," said the magistrate, firmly, "you must take pot-luck with me here."

"Charles," said the other, "food I can regard with indifference, providing you and I have a good old yarn about the times that were. Lord, what centuries ago it all seems! When was it we were first at that school in North London? 'Eighty-four or 'eighty-five? I can't remember everything so well as I did."

Memory has a trick of dozing, but it can be awakened by references to the distant past. Before the two sat at table, they were providing each other with names of contemporaries at school, names of masters, scores at cricket

matches, triumphs in the examination-room. Of the career of many of their early acquaintances they had no knowledge, of the progress of some news was exchanged, and they noted that the most promising had not always succeeded; from the head lad both had lately received a communication begging that he might quote them as references in an appeal he was making for a berth as collector to a life insurance firm. Others, not reckoned as earnest students, were doing well.

"You yourself, Henry, scarcely gained the complete approval of the authorities."

"And you, Charles, were never regarded as a model."

"I am inclined to think that the most adventurous business we were both mixed up in was that affair of Walkett's."

"By Jove," declared the other, vehemently, "there's no doubt about it that the Walkett affair was a stroke of genius on our part. Looking back, I am astonished that two boys——"

"We were nothing more than boys."

"——could have arranged and carried out such an ingenious plan. And all off our own bats, mind you."

"That was the exhilarating beauty of it!"

They talked of other incidents, but when coffee was brought in, reminiscence went again in the direction of the Walkett episode. Walkett, it appeared, was a shopkeeper at Hampstead. In Heath Street, Hampstead, not far from the place where the Tube station now exists. Walkett, making considerable amounts out of schools and like institutions, decided to regard some of the young gentlemen with severity for no other reason than that, in his presence, they adopted a cold-in-the-head manner of speech which, in his case, was permanent and seemingly incurable. If Charles or Henry entered the shop, Walkett, throughout the visit, kept on them the eye of suspicion; when they left, he followed to the doorway and watched their departure. There was a Miss Walkett, a thirteen-year-old lady, and the fact that Charles had once sent her a Valentine with his full signature and

"HENRY, LIGHTING HIS CIGAR, CAME OUT AS AN ENTERTAINER; HIS FRIEND THE MAGISTRATE LISTENED WITH CANDID DELIGHT."

address appended, excused her father's attitude. Mr. Walkett said that an ugly Valentine from one party to another could, in February, be understood and pardoned; a romantic specimen, with a gilded heart as target for a golden Cupid, was another matter altogether. He threatened that if the overtures were repeated, Mrs. Walkett should be let loose, the headmaster informed.

"Walkett was an unforgivable hound," remarked Charles.

"I loathed him," agreed Henry. "But I rather fancy we got level with the bounder."

The other chuckled. "Tell me all you can remember, in case I've forgotten any of the details. It's too precious to escape from the memory."

Henry, lighting his cigar and walking up and down the room, came out, for a rare occasion, as an entertainer; his friend the magistrate listened with candid delight. Of a Saturday afternoon when Charles endeavoured to persuade an assistant at the shop to convey, on his behalf, a white rose to Miss Walkett, with a message that concerned the afternoon of the following day, when, it was recommended, the young lady could easily relieve herself from the obligation of attending Sunday-school at the Presbyterian chapel. Of Charles, whilst thus using persuasive arguments, finding his ear caught by Miss Walkett's father, and, moreover, twisted, and causing some pain, and of Charles being ejected from the shop with every sign of ignominy. Of Charles taking advice with his friend Henry, and Henry's brilliant suggestion. Of a creeping away from the boarding-school on the Sunday evening with hammer, chains, and stout nails. Of a fixing up of the main door and the private door of the establishment in Heath Street, and a waiting there until the supper party, made up of the Presbyterian minister and other select friends, desired to leave. Of all the highly enjoyable and never-to-be-over-relished hullaballoo that ensued, with a diverted and unhelpful crowd assembling, and the two lads in ambush opposite.

"Glorious days!" cried Charles, appreciatively. "'Pon my word, life would be nothing without these enjoyable memories. And now, dear chap, I must be getting back to the court; good-bye, good-bye, good-bye!"

The magistrate, taking his seat after lunch, was reminded by his clerk of the case which required his decision. The two small criminals were this time placed near to him; he inspected them rather thoughtfully.

"What you did," he said, in quiet tones, "was very wrong, but, after all, boys will be boys, and, later on, they will be men. Run away, and try to be as considerate as ever you can to grown-up people."

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 72.

A PAIR of lovers, of a bygone age,
Whose fate is still enacted on the stage.

1. Subtract or add, divide or multiply;
And even harder things some folk will try.

2. It is not much that here we hope to get,
Although in youthful and in aged met.

3. This word will famous character define;
Alter the head—how useful is a line.

4. Here it lacks head and tail: a noted fall
The creature's other name will soon recall.

5. Let a third part of famous place be sought.
Think of a palace, garden, isle, and fort.

6. Word of nine letters, six of which we see,
Quadragenarian, if wise, will be.

7. Two love, at first; and yet it may portend
A tie; then note, how will the service end?

8. The uncle of a famous king who died
Upon the battlefield his sons beside.

9. One solitary person, tailless here;
Reversed, a countless number will appear.

PAX.

Answers to Acrostic No. 72 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on November 8th.*

Two answers may be sent to every light.
It is essential that solvers, with their answers to this acrostic, should send also their real names and addresses.

ANSWER TO No. 70.

1.	T	ros	S
2.	H	u	E
3.	E	tn	A
4.	F	lie	S
5.	O	n	O
6.	U	nclea	N
7.	R	iver	S

NOTES.—Light 5. Kimono. Rudyard Kipling's book, *Kim*. 6. Uncle, an.

ANSWER TO No. 71.

1.	H	as	P
2.	I	b	I
3.	G	i	G
4.	G	lin	G
5.	L	abe	L
6.	E	llips	E
7.	D	iamon	D
8.	Y	earl	Y

NOTES.—Light 2. Ibis. Latin, *ibi*, there. 3 and 4. Giggling. 5. A bell. "Ring out the old, ring in the new." 6. The earth's orbit. *Else*, enclosing *lip*. 7. *Amo*, I love, within. 8. Early.

Correspondents who write to the Acrostic Editor and desire answers to their inquiries should enclose a stamped addressed envelope with their letters, and the A. E. will endeavour to reply.

A PAINTER OF "SPIRIT-PICTURES."

By HERBERT VIVIAN.

EVERY dabbler in table-turning, spirit-rapping, and other primitive experiments of the occult is familiar with planchette and suchlike ways of obtaining messages from the other world by automatic writing. Allow your hand to wander freely over a sheet of paper with a pencil, and you will probably produce various curves and scribblings and more or less nonsensical designs. But if you are "psychic" you will gradually find yourself forming words and sentences that may be taken as answers to questions you have asked the spirits, who may prove to be mischievous or wise, just like ordinary mortals.

But the application of this form of divination to the arts is much rarer. I have met a lady with no artistic training who has automatically painted pictures of deep meaning and surprising patterns which have been eagerly bought up by cloth manufacturers. Another pioneer of mystic art has since appeared in the person of Mr. Charles Horsfall, who is perhaps the most realistic portrait-painter of the day. He tells me he has no imagination, because he reproduces only what he sees instead of letting his fancy loose upon such themes as the Siege of Troy or the Garden of Eden. I contend, however, that he does himself an injustice, for his perception of his sitters' characters and his translation of them on to canvas have all the uncanniness of the most vivid imagination. He can depict a pair of eyes in so lifelike a way that he makes a man or woman seem to start out of a frame and do everything but speak.

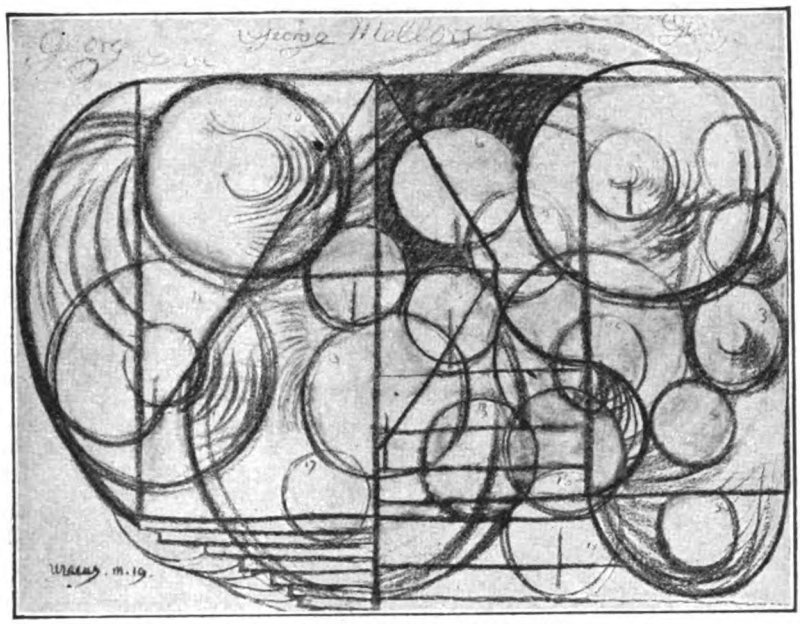
He has been painting since 1893, and his greatest success is undoubtedly his portrait of Lord Kitchener, which was done from a sketch painted in the dining-room of Buckingham Palace after the Egyptian campaign. Mr. Horsfall boasts that he never flatters his subjects. He tries to give their most pleasing aspects, but that is all. It is a case of "warts and all." Here we are given that slight but very characteristic cast of eye, almost a squint, in those steely-blue eyes, which contrasted so strongly with the dark eyebrows and very ruddy skin. The picture was selected for the National Portrait Gallery after Lord Kitchener's death in 1917, and presented by Sir Lees Knowles, to whom it belonged. It is drawn in pastel on rough canvas, which makes it look like oils. Mr. Horsfall was a prisoner at Ruhleben at the time of the selection, and heard of the honour paid him whilst in captivity. Among his other portraits, of which he has painted no fewer than seventy-three since emerging from the clutches of the Hun, are a startlingly lifelike one of Commander Hamilton Benn, M.P., the Zeebruggehero, and his wife; also Bishop Bury, the Anglican prelate for North and West Europe, who was authorized to visit Ruhleben camp.

AN EXAMPLE OF MR. HORSFALL'S PORTRAITURE.

Reproduced by kind permission of Mr. John Lane.

"I have now found the answer to a question I often asked myself during my three years' captivity," Mr. Horsfall told me in his studio: "namely, why I did not pass beyond the veil after a severe

illness I contracted through the privations I endured. I thought it would have simplified matters, as I lost everything I possessed, and for a long time after my return I had to live on charity. I discovered last December that I was called upon to do very special work of an original kind. Three mediums, who knew nothing whatever about me, told me independently that I had a gift for automatic painting and that it was my duty to pursue it. The idea did not please me, as I feared the new work might interfere with my portraits, or that I might no longer distinguish between my own work and that which was inspirational."



"PLAN OF THE NEW JERUSALEM."

He has since learned from the spirits that he is "controlled" by an Egyptian named Thephtis, who was high priest of the Temple of Osiris, near Thebes, and passed away during the 18th Dynasty. "It is he who is educating me and sending me my different teachers for painting and music. One of those teachers is William Blake, the poet and painter, who died early last century. I do the work for them. It is their work, not mine. I merely hold the brush or the chalk and apply it as I am directed. I do not choose the colours. Sometimes I even paint with my eyes shut, and I never know what is being produced until it is finished."

He showed me a portrait of Thephtis, inspired by William Blake. It is a tall, commanding figure clad in priest's dress; the long, smooth black hair is bound with a red and gold fillet surmounted by the Uræus; the left hand is outstretched, as in ancient Egyptian drawings; and the whole figure is surrounded with "thought forms"—wavy lines of blue and pink and green. On the studio mantelpiece the place of honour is occupied by a small green metal figure with a pointed nose. This is the Uræus, or symbolical snake, which was worn by Egyptian priests and kings.

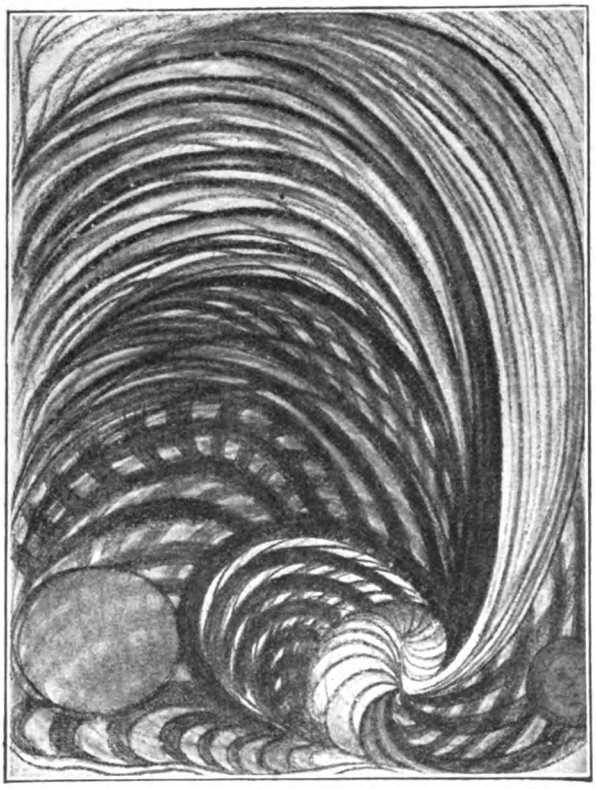
"My guide painted one on his picture of my skull," said Mr. Horsfall, "but of course mine had not the royal sign like his. I asked him why he took so much interest in me, and he explained that it was because I was a reincarnation of an Egyptian he used to know intimately over three thousand years ago."

I have seen Mr. Horsfall communicating with his "guide" and his teachers. He talks quite familiarly with them: "My dear Thephtis" or "My dear Blake," as the case may be. Then he asks a question, and his finger raps out the answer—three times for "Yes" and once for "No." Or his finger will be led to point to some object in the room. For instance, when he wanted to know the meaning of a symbol in an automatic picture, he pointed to a mirror, which meant vanity; another time to his forehead, which meant human intelligence.

"At first," he told me, "the subjects I painted were quite unintelligible to me. I called one 'Japan Seen from an Aeroplane,' another 'The Three Green Moons.' Later on I learned that what I regarded as the Sea of Japan signified spirituality, and the moons were initiations. My first attempt was in pastel and rather crude—an open oyster-shell, illustrating my receptiveness of the mysteries of the other world. Later on I had to paint sixty targets—I called them my footballs—to teach me auric colours—that is, the colours of the emanations of the soul and body."

The next stage was a very large number of apparently fantastic designs in oils, pastel, charcoal, and distemper. The first of those reproduced with this article looks like a very elaborate problem of Euclid. It is called the "Plan of the New Jerusalem" and embodies the most ancient and wonderful monuments of the world. An alternative title is "Evolving the Old World into the New Era." Note the pyramid in the centre. Then turn the picture upside down and you may find the Arch of the Temple of Solomon, shaped somewhat like a croquet hoop, repeated four times. It is difficult to find at first, but presently it cannot be missed, as in the case of a puzzle where you have a tree with a face lurking in the branches.

The post-mark circles are all "initiations."



"THE GREAT CENTRE FROM WHICH ALL RISES."

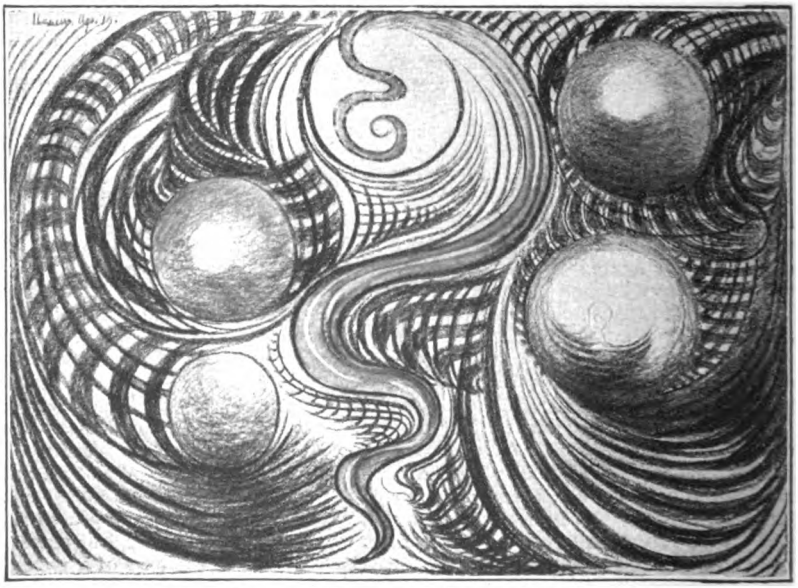
Christ, Buddha, Michel Angelo were great initiates; Bonaparte and the ex-Kaiser also, but sinister ones. Indeed, in a sense, every human being is an initiate or incarnation.

This picture greatly impressed a well-known mystic, who exclaimed: "I see over it all a veiled figure, showing that these mysteries are open to all *except to those who have their eyes open.*" This oracular sentence means that we who see only with our eyes and not with our spirits (*i.e.*, have our eyes open only to outward and visible signs) cannot perceive the mysteries behind the veil.

The next drawing is called "The Great Centre from Which All Rises." Mr. Horsfall told me that "the entities from the other world" are particularly pleased with it. The divine forces at the bottom of the picture send out their rays of tremendous force into cosmos and their thought-waves to humanity still in darkness. There is certainly a remarkable impression of vehement movement about the great waves surging wildly upwards like a cataract—the thought-waves of the divinity giving the cosmos its enormous strength.

Next comes "Initiation Through Wisdom," and it is the most important of all. The white circle at the top is again the divine initiation, formed through a large snake symbolizing wisdom. The other balls or planets are lower initiations, producing waves of thought, intelligence, health, and love of humanity.

Then we have "Om, the Great Word," or "The Birth of Cosmos," an intense whorl of fantastic waves. A lady was sent off into a deep trance immediately she beheld it. "You have no idea how important it is," she told the painter. Note the cameo bust in the central circle. This represents the Divinity initiating the rotatory movement of the universe, on which all creation depended. The bright egg or capsule on the left is the human brain, Mr. Horsfall was informed by the spirit of Blake. The whirling of creation is drawing nearer and nearer to it, and is about to set life in motion. I suggested that this drawing was an example of Futurist art, but it seems rather to belong to

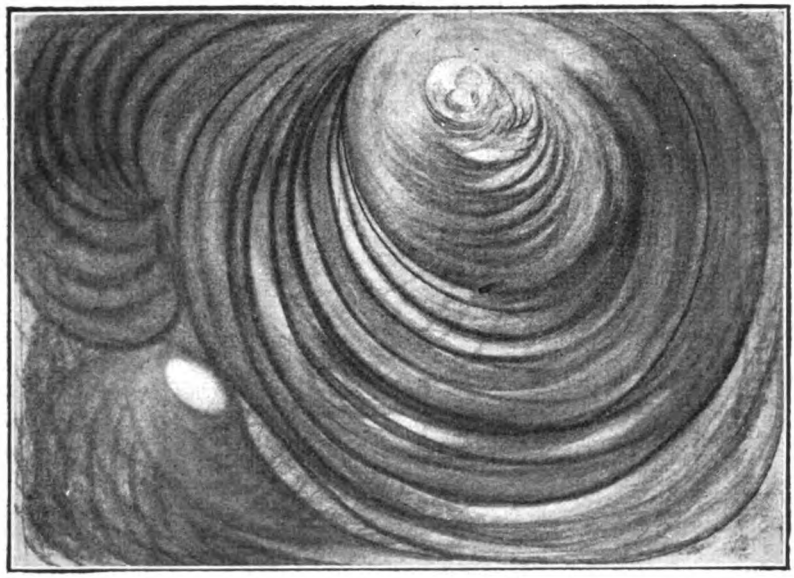


"INITIATION THROUGH WISDOM."

prehistoric or pre-creation times.

Of "The Five Higher Initiations," the three lower ones are irregularly shaped because they are still only in process of formation, and have not yet become circular. Around them are the thought-waves which they produce.

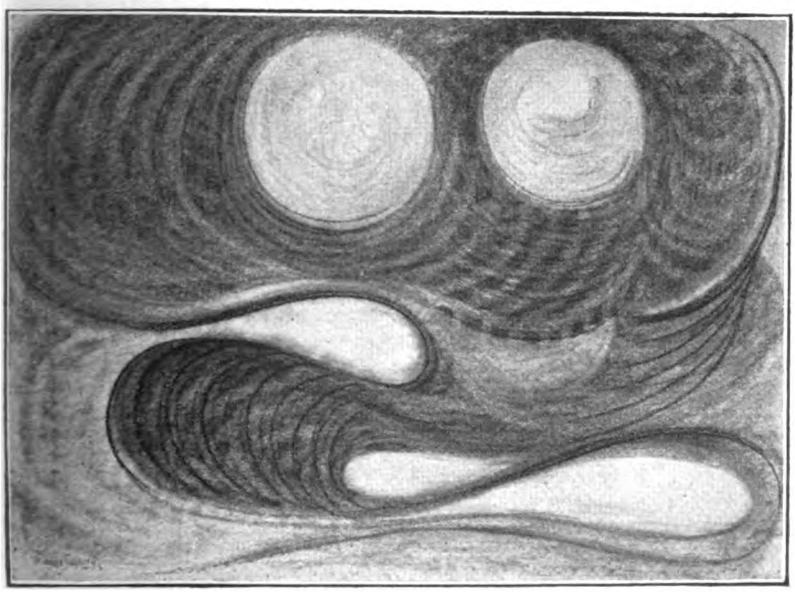
"The Matrix of Creation," reproduced on the next page, is represented by a shell of light. It is protected by iron bars to indicate how precious it is—a treasure in an openwork casket, or a lantern like that of Holman Hunt's "Light of the World." Here we see how the creative spirit works in the darkness and sheds a bright light into the world: "Let there be light!" It expresses the machinery of cosmos, the descent of spirit into matter. In the top left corner a snail-like whorl is a heart, symbolical of love. The other circles are initiations, in which we can detect human faces beneath the crescents.



"THE BIRTH OF COSMOS."

These pictures may suffice to give an idea of Mr. Horsfall's symbolical work, of which he has shown me dozens of examples. Some of the Early Italian, pre-Raphaelite colours are very beautiful, especially some oranges and yellows in a picture like the hair of a goddess wafted in the breeze. That he has entitled "The Music of the Spheres," and a well-known musician said to him: "I often behold forms exactly like that while I am composing."

Then I saw a lovely opalescent pattern of blue, like the sky at dawn, with mystical faces peeping out unexpectedly from the clouds. A blaze of red is "Initiation Through Fire," and a green moon is "Initiation Through Sorrow." The spirits led Mr. Horsfall to a matchbox to explain that the red meant fire. Then there are chaotic figures struggling up towards eternity: these are embryos of races still slumbering in cosmos—cruel, hard, Egyptian or Hebrew faces, as well as kindly ones. A sort of sea-monster in light pinks and blues represents waves of intelligence. Another is a glorious sunrise in all tones and shades of gold, with faces like portraits in golden plates; another, in distemper, is a true Wedgwood pattern, with plates and dishes to



"THE FIVE HIGHER INITIATIONS."

convey initiations. Several critics have suggested that these pictures—especially a sort of snowstorm scene—would make excellent designs for tapestries and wallpapers and ceiling decorations.

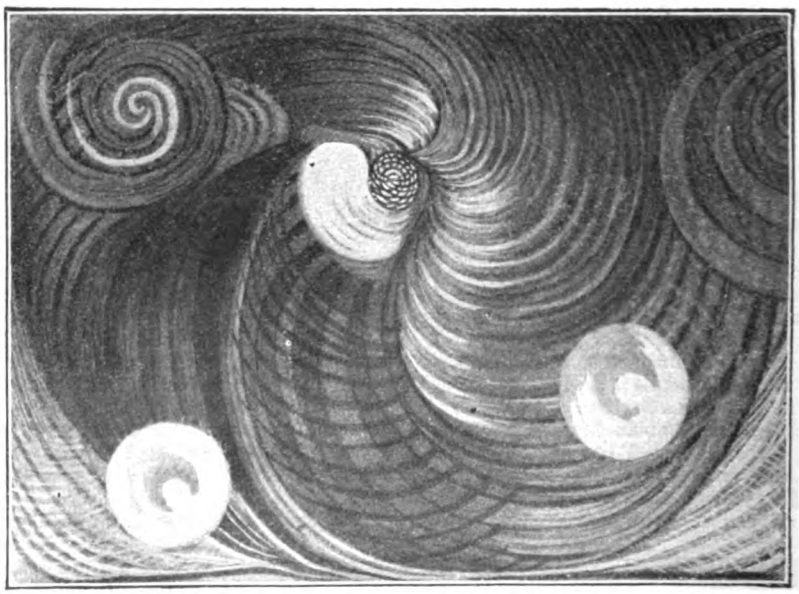
Some, however, are almost grotesque. I saw a weird tangle like an octopus caught in a net of seaweeds. Black, orange, and green balls had mystical meanings but an aquarium effect. Then there was "The Attainment of Aspiration," shown through an enormous sail-shaped wing with a square pattern like cordage outside a balloon.

A big, delirious-looking green snake coiled round a series of pink eggs is wisdom breeding

it for anything but a sole. Then it was revealed that the spirits were conveying their meaning by a pun: Mr. Horsfall was to paint *souls*.

He began with his own aura. This, he explains, is the spiritual emanation which we all have floating around our bodies, but which can be perceived only by mystics. The halo of a saint in a stained-glass window is a portion of the aura; but an aura is not necessarily saintly, for the wicked also have emanations.

The first step is to paint a little figure in an oval in the centre of the canvas to represent the subject. In the left side of this figure is a smaller, fainter sketch of another figure to illustrate positive and negative, or masculine and feminine,



"THE MATRIX OF CREATION."

love of humanity. Indeed, snakes occur almost as frequently as moons. A fiery snake illustrates human passions, and "a snake in chaos" has been called "The Tragedy of a Soul." Mr. Horsfall's spirits should certainly be called in by enterprising publishers in search of titles for romances. One chaotic, bubbly picture, however, has not yet been explained, even by the wisest mediums.

When the training by targets and footballs was completed, the "control" suddenly painted the large sole of a foot in the middle of a canvas. At first this was thought to be one of the usual unformed initiations, but it was quite different in appearance; indeed, there was no mistaking

both of which are present in varying degrees in every character. Then the "control" proceeds to depict the soul surrounding the body by means of various fantastic designs. Mr. Horsfall's own aura is of all colours, like a sort of tartan, with long lines converging to his figure. He says his lack of imagination is proved by the fact that the line of intelligence does not go far beyond his head, but blue and green waves indicate spirituality and health. Sometimes a bird is introduced as a symbol of an astral being, usually in blue and orange. I asked if this was the proverbial early bird. "Blake did this for me," he replied; "he was the bird who caught me. I am the mere worm the humble instrument."

The Most Popular of the Nation's Pictures

WHAT is the best test of the popularity of a picture? Some works of art had their position in public favour established by the sale of engravings, such as Sir Luke Fildes' "The Doctor" and Lady Butler's "The Roll Call." At the Royal Academy every year some one or more pictures become conspicuous by the crowd they attract at Burlington House. With the application of a similar test the curators of our national and municipal galleries should be in an exceptionally favourable position in studying the public taste in art. How is this taste illustrated by the preference shown in respect to the collections under their control?

We have put the question, "Which picture in your gallery do you consider the most popular?" to a number of these officials throughout the country, with the result shown in this article. As will be seen, in one or two cases the public choice has been influenced by local feelings, but, generally speaking, we think the replies to our inquiry throw an interesting light upon the artistic taste of the crowd in London and other great cities.

"THE AGE OF INNOCENCE."
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.
(*National Gallery.*)

Writing on behalf of the National Gallery, Mr C. H. Collins Baker, the Keeper and Secretary, assumed that "a fair gauge of the popularity of a picture is the sale of its reproductions in post-card or print forms." By this test, Mr. Baker mentioned Reynolds's "Age of Innocence," "The Child Samuel," and "Heads of Angels" as the most popular pictures in the gallery, giving the first place to "The Age of Innocence."

"I must add," said Mr. Baker, "that Sassoferrato's 'Madonna in Prayer' and Landseer's animal subjects, when we had them exhibited in the gallery, rivalled the Reynolds pictures."

"The Age of Innocence" was presented to the National Gallery in 1847, with a number of other pictures forming the Vernon Collection. The canvas, only thirty inches by twenty-five, had cost Mr. Robert Vernon fifteen hundred and twenty guineas three years before.

The little girl in the picture was Sir Joshua Reynolds's niece, Theophila Gwatkin, a Devonshire lass of six years, who, whilst visiting London with her parents in 1788, was painted by Sir Joshua as she romped about his studio in Leicester Square.

The Dulwich College Gallery has a number of

"THE PRINCESS VICTORIA."—S. P. DENNING.
(*Dulwich College Gallery*)

most valuable pictures of European reputation. Among others, for instance, Reynolds's "Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse," which some experts consider to be the original masterpiece, whilst the work for which the Duke of Westminster recently refused fifty thousand pounds at Christie's is the replica.

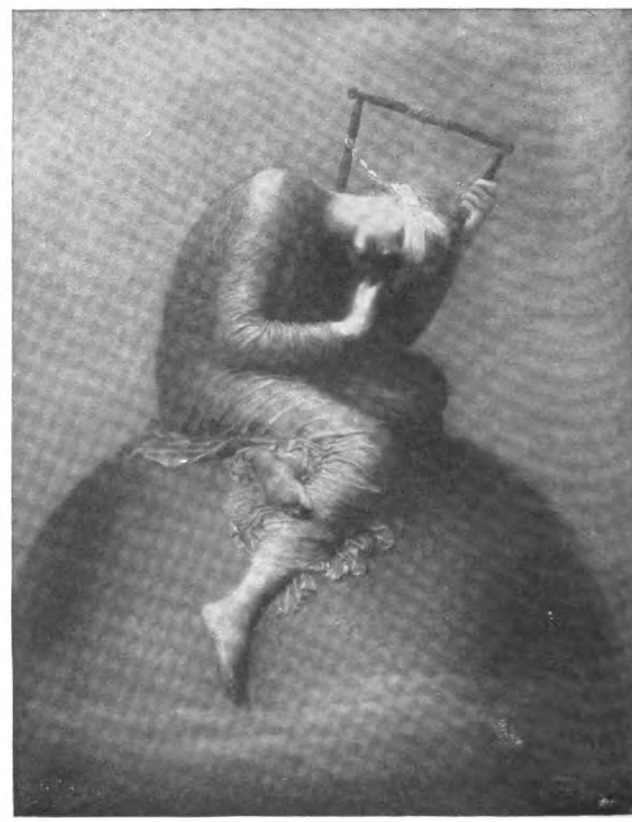
Nevertheless, Mr. S. W. Bickell, Clerk to the Governors of the College, declared in reply to our inquiry, without hesitation or qualification, that the most popular picture in the gallery is "The Princess Victoria," a portrait of Queen Victoria at the age of four, which cost the gallery only thirty pounds. The painter, Mr. S. P. Denning, was the Keeper of the Pictures in the Dulwich Gallery from 1821 until his death, but the picture (which measures only eleven inches by eight and three-quarter inches) was not acquired until 1891.

In a note to the catalogue, Sir Edward Cook says that the child was then living with her mother, the Duchess of Kent, in Kensington Palace, and might often be seen walking in Kensington Gardens. Mr. Denning had doubtless made his sketch on such an occasion. The little girl is somewhat "bunched up" in not very becoming clothes. She was brought up very simply. For the summer, "the little Princess," we are told, "had two muslin dresses and two plain gingham frocks, which were altered according to her growth."

Mr. C. Aitken, the Curator of the National Gallery of British Art (the Tate Gallery), first mentioned Watts's "Hope" in naming some of the most popular pictures in the great collection at Millbank. But he qualified his choice by remarking that there are many different "publics" and "tastes," and for this reason mentioned also Furse's portrait of Lord Roberts and three pictures by Millais—"Ophelia," "The Boyhood of Raleigh," and "The North-West Passage."

"Hope" was painted by Mr. G. F. Watts, R.A., in 1887–88. Whilst it is undoubtedly the most popular of this artist's works, it is also the one—according to his own statement—which gave him the least trouble to paint. Mr. Watts refused an offer of two thousand guineas for "Hope" in order that he might present it to the nation!

In describing the picture and its symbolical figure, Watts is recorded as saying: "All the strings of her instrument are broken but one, and she is trying to get all possible music out of



"HOPE."—G. F. WATTS.
(*Tate Gallery*)

the poor tinkle." The "Hope" Watts had in mind, as is clearly suggested by the representation of the globe, is the "Hope" of humanity at large; but in at least one instance the picture had a remarkable meaning for an individual.

Some years after prints of "Hope" had been published the artist received a letter from a stranger who wished to acknowledge the help the picture had given him in a dark and critical hour of his life. In a grimy Northern town, when the writer was in the depths of despair, an engraving of "Hope" in a print-seller's window had arrested his attention. The print had been bought with one or two of his few remaining shillings, and its message pondered upon, with the result that for one life the whole course of events had been changed. The letter concluded, as Mrs. Watts relates in the biography of her husband, with these words: "I do not know you, nor have I seen the face of one who gave me my 'Hope,' but I thank God for the chance of that day when it came to me in my sore need."

"MRS. SCOTT MONCRIEFF."—SIR HENRY RAEBURN.
(*National Gallery of Scotland.*)

"It is hard to say," writes Mr. T. C. Morton, Keeper of the National Gallery of Scotland, "what is the most popular picture here, but perhaps it lies between two of Raeburn's—'Mrs. Scott Moncrieff' and 'Colonel Alastair Macdonell.' Both pictures are not only popular, but stand high as works of art—a rare combination."

"The figure is turned towards us," we read in the catalogue of the Edinburgh collection, with reference to the portrait of Mrs. Scott Moncrieff, "but the head, beautifully poised on the thin

"THE DREAMERS."—ALBERT MOORE.
(*Birmingham Art Gallery.*)

neck, looks to the right and is tilted backwards. Her hair clusters in a big wavy curl on each brow, shadowing her eyes, for the light falls from the left front, and the further cheek melts softly into the dark brown background. Over her low, square-cut gown of mellow white she wears a loose red cloak which envelops her shoulders and, hanging open in front, is caught together again near the bottom of the canvas."

The portrait, which was painted about 1814, is regarded by critics as one of the best examples of Sir Henry Raeburn's art during his best period. It has been published as an etching and also as a mezzotint. Bequeathed to the Royal Scottish Academy in 1854 by the lady's husband, the Academy in its turn presented it to the National Gallery of Scotland in 1910.

"THE SIGNING OF THE MARRIAGE REGISTER."—JAMES CHARLES. (*Bradford Art Gallery.*)

"Your question is a difficult one to answer," said Sir Whitworth Wallis, F.S.A., the Keeper of the City of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. "There are many pictures here which are great popular favourites, but I think probably the most popular work, though it must not in any way be looked upon as my own choice, is Albert Moore's 'Dreamers'—at any rate, it is the picture of which we sell the most photographs.

"The picture was presented to the gallery," added Sir Whitworth, "by the late Sir Richard Tangye and Mr. George Tangye, in memory of the art work of the late John Henry Chamberlain, a well-known Birmingham artist."

"The Dreamers," as a piece of decorative work, is typical of practically the whole of Albert Moore's work. It was painted at his Kensington studio between 1879 and 1882. Exhibited at the Royal Academy in the latter year, its reception by the critics was not too favourable. The *Times* said: "There is a languid heaviness about all the young women in the picture which is almost suggestive of over-feeding," whilst the *Observer* considered that "The dreaming damsels are in such attitudes that their sensations on awakening are likely to be terrible." The public did not share this cynical levity in regarding the picture, which aroused general admiration, but nevertheless was unsold when the exhibition closed.

In the autumn of 1882 "The Dreamers" was taken to Birmingham and shown in the exhibition of the Birmingham Society of Artists. It aroused the enthusiastic appreciation of the brothers Tangye, who, acting entirely on their own judgment, purchased the picture for eight hundred pounds and presented it to the recently-established municipal gallery. The price at the time was a generous one, but "The Dreamers," which measures two feet three inches by three feet eleven inches, would doubtless fetch a much bigger price at Christie's to-day.

Mr. Butler Wood, Director of the Bradford Corporation Art Gallery, coupled "The Signing of the Marriage Register," by James Charles, and "The Golden Fleece," by Herbert Draper—two very different pictures in subject and style—as "most attracting the attention of the general public." "They are, as it happens," adds Mr. Wood, "well-painted pictures, but it is the dramatic way in which the story is presented that appeals to the spectators."

"The Signing of the Marriage Register," to which Mr. Wood gave the first place, was painted at Bosham, near Chichester, in circumstances which have been described by the artist as follows:—

"As a rule, life in a country village is very uneventful, so that when a wedding takes place it is hailed with great delight. I happened to be an invited guest on one of those happy occasions, and saw the register signed in the little fishing village of Bosham, Sussex.

"The fisher-folk are a class by themselves, and seldom intermarry with the country people. The scene in my picture is one of those rare events, but is none the less interesting by reason of the contrast in character and costume.

"The Sussex maids are above the average for beauty. One often sees in the by-lanes girls with a grace and carriage that many a duchess might envy. The dialect is gentle and pleasing, and if they are not well educated, when they speak one is never offended by any sense of vulgarity. The characters in the picture are all taken from life, and give a fair idea of their general appearance."

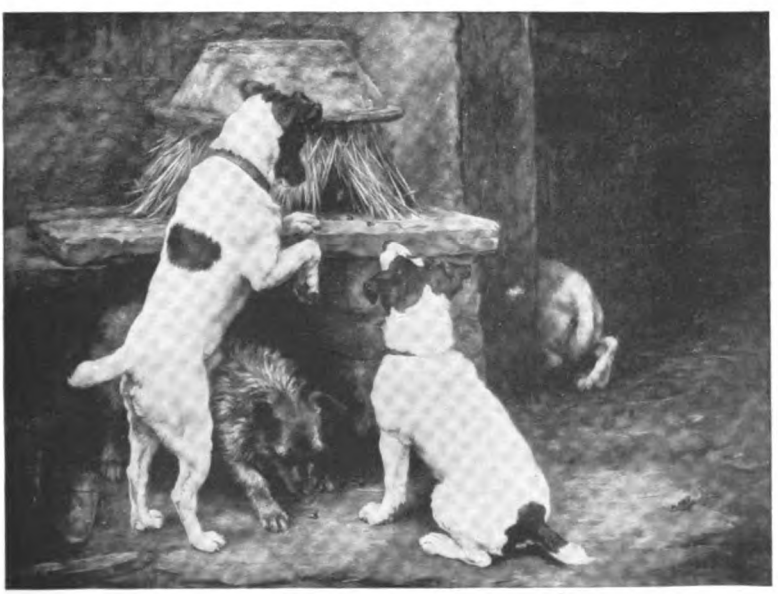
"CABOT'S DEPARTURE FROM BRISTOL ON HIS VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY."—ERNEST BOARD.
(*Bristol Art Gallery.*)

"The most popular picture here," said Mr. Herbert Bolton, M.Sc., the Director of the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, "is one which has strong local interest, that of 'Cabot's Departure from Bristol on his Voyage of Discovery.' This was painted by a local artist, Mr. Ernest Board."

The scene represented in the picture took place in 1497, when Sebastian Cabot, accompanied by his father, John Cabot, sailed from Bristol in a ship called the *Matthew*, on a voyage which resulted in the discovery of Newfoundland.

"The subject of the picture," says Mr. Board, "was one that appealed to me long before I had anything like sufficient ability to paint it. However, after my training at the Royal Academy Schools and a period of study in the studio of the late E. A. Abbey, R.A., I had the opportunity of carrying it out, being commissioned to paint it by the late Mr. Francis J. Fry.

"As it was my first big canvas it took me a considerable time to execute—many of the costumes and other details being made and decorated by myself before being arranged and depicted on the canvas. I had the picture in my studio for two years before I submitted it to the Royal Academy for exhibition, when it was hung in a prominent position on the line. After the exhibition Mr. Fry, thinking it would be of great interest to Bristolians and others, decided to present it to the Bristol Art Gallery."



"BUSY BODIES AND BUSY BEES."—MISS LUCY LEAVERS.
(*Nottingham Art Gallery.*)

"ULYSSES AND THE SIRENS."—HERBERT DRAPER.
(*Hull Art Gallery.*)

As in the case of Bristol, local feeling seems to haveinfluenced the popular choice at Nottingham.

"I think I may say," writes Mr. G. H. Wallis, the Director of the Municipal Art Gallery in that city, "that the picture which is the most popular with the general public is entitled 'Busy Bodies and Busy Bees,' by Miss Lucy Leavers, a native of Nottingham, which was purchased in 1892 and given to the gallery by the late Alderman J. Renals, J.P.

"The subject represents two terrier dogs investigating a bee-hive, a wire-haired Skye terrier curiously examining some dead bees upon the ground, and just the hindquarter of another dog is seen disappearing round the partitions to the right, evidently suffering from the smart sting of a bee, which clings tenaciously to him as he retreats."

Herbert Draper's "Ulysses and the Sirens" was the picture nominated by Mr. A. H. Proctor, the Curator of the Hull Art Gallery. "This picture," says Mr. Proctor, "was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1909 and was purchased by the Corporation out of a gift of ten thousand pounds for the permanent collection, given by the Right Hon. T. R. Ferens."

The popularity of "Ulysses and the Sirens," it must be supposed, is in spite of, not because of, the subject of the picture, and is a tribute to the power of the artist. Without disrespect to the people of Hull, it may be said that they are probably not generally familiar with the passage in Homer's "Odyssey" narrating the incident which Mr. Draper has taken as his theme—one of the many adventures which the heroic King of Ithaca experienced on returning from the siege of Troy to his own kingdom.

"*I fear*" (the italics are ours) "that the most popular picture in the permanent collection belonging to the Corporation of Manchester is Lord Leighton's 'Last Watch of Hero,'" writes Mr. Lawrence Howard, the Manchester Curator. Mr. Howard does not explain why he uses the word "fear," and it can only be supposed that his judgment does not coincide with that of the public.

The picture, of course, is based upon the old Greek legend of Hero and Leander. Leander, a young man of Abydos, is said to have swum nightly across the Hellespont (now called the Dardanelles) to visit his lover, Hero, a priestess of Sestos. One night he was drowned in his attempt and Hero jumped into the Hellespont also.

The picture is remarkable for its successful representation of a tear, which can be distinctly

seen upon Hero's eyelid. It was painted by Lord Leighton in 1887 and was purchased for the Manchester Gallery out of Corporation funds.

"LAST WATCH OF HERO."—LORD LEIGHTON.
(Manchester Art Gallery.)

Mr. Thomas W. Hand, Curator of the City Art Gallery, Leeds, chose "without hesitation" Lady Butler's "Scotland for Ever!" as the most popular picture in his gallery.

With respect to this well-known canvas, which commemorates the exploit of the Scots Greys at Waterloo, Lady Butler, writing from her home in County Tipperary, has been kind enough to give us some interesting particulars.

"It was a subject I had long contemplated painting, and a charge of the 'Greys' which was very kindly ordered for me at Aldershot in 1874 gave me the necessary military details. I noticed how the younger horses (darker grey than the older ones) forged on ahead as the pace increased; being very long-sighted, I was able to stand in front of the charge quite a usefully long time before their near approach warned me to stand aside. From the side I saw the 'Halt!' of which I made a sketch from memory. I don't know who has that sketch now.

"I did not paint the picture until 1880, and I made a great many studies of white and grey troop horses for it—heavy artillery horses, as the modern heavy cavalry ones are not big enough for Waterloo.

"I had visited the field of the battle and was shown the ground on which the charge took place—a turnip field then, as at the time I saw it. Hence the foreground of the picture."

The picture was bought from the artist by Colonel Harding, now of Madingley Hall, Cambridge, formerly of Leeds, and presented by him to the Municipal Gallery during the time he was Chairman of the Art Gallery Committee.

"In a gallery such as that of Glasgow, containing hundreds of pictures representative of all countries and

"SCOTLAND FOR EVER!"—LADY BUTLER.
(Leeds Art Gallery.)

'schools,' it is difficult," says Mr. T. C. F. Brotchie, Curator of the Glasgow Art Galleries, "to select one particular canvas and assert 'This is our most popular work.' We possess many paintings of what may be called a 'popular' character. For example, we have Millais' 'Ornithologist'; Colin Hunter's 'Good-night to Skye'; Noel Paton's 'Hesperus'; Brangwyn's 'Burial at Sea'; and others which come under the term 'popular' æsthetically, as well as from the other and what I might call the dictionary definition of the phrase. It is a somewhat elastic phrase. We have many popular pictures which attract yearly thousands of people, critics and connoisseurs, artists and men of taste generally. Under this head might be placed our wonderful Van der Goes' 'St. Victor with a Donor,' a work of brilliant colour and rare technique; Giorgione's 'Adultress Brought Before Christ'; our two Botticelli gems, 'The Annunciation' and the 'Virgin Child and St. John with Angels'; Rembrandt's 'Man in Armour'; the Whistler 'Carlyle,' and so on. But accepting the dictionary definition of 'popular,' I think I might venture to say that Pettie's piquant 'Two Strings to Her Bow' might be regarded as filling the *rôle* of 'most popular.' It is a work of world-wide celebrity, and since coming into our possession it has been loaned and exhibited in Perth, Plymouth, Leeds, Nottingham, Toronto, and many other cities at home and abroad. There is a flavour of romance, or at all events of interest, in the story of how it came into our possession. Pettie first exhibited 'Two Strings to Her Bow' at the Royal Academy of 1887; the following year it formed one of the collection of pictures at the Glasgow International Exhibition. The Exhibition Committee, with the laudable object of fostering and stimulating a love of art in Glasgow and the West of Scotland, held an Art Union draw. Upwards of seventy thousand tickets were sold at, I think, a shilling each. The first prize was five hundred pounds. The holder of the winning ticket proved to be a young working draper who had made the lucky investment ten days before the draw took place. He was a man of taste, and he selected and purchased Pettie's 'Two Strings to Her Bow,' the purchase price being four hundred and fifty pounds; the balance was expended on a smaller canvas. Lord Provost Sir John Muir, of Glasgow, recognizing the fine 'human' appeal which supplements the ripe artistry of the canvas, and being desirous of assisting the development of the representation of modern art in our Corporation Galleries, approached the winner of the picture, purchased, and gifted it to the Glasgow Public Art Collection. It is of interest to mention that one of the figures of the young men in the composition represents Mr. Hamish MacCunn, the well-known Scottish composer, and the figure of the charming young lady who is so obviously enjoying a situation dear to the feminine heart is, I believe, that of the artist's daughter. The picture is justly popular, not

"TWO STRINGS TO HER BOW."—JOHN PETTIE.
(*Glasgow Art Galleries.*)

only for its skilled craftsmanship, but also for the keen appeal it makes to the kindly humour that is—fortunately—part of the heritage of the sons and daughters of Adam."

In the public art gallery attached to the Royal Holloway College, Englefield Green, Surrey, there are two pictures so much vying with each other in the popular estimation that the Curator, Mr. C. W. Carey, found it impossible to decide between them. "Both 'The Railway Station,' by W. P. Frith, R.A., and 'The Babylonian Marriage Market,' by E. Long, R.A.," said Mr. Carey, "attract a very considerable amount of attention, and I think, if you mention only one picture, the choice can rest with you. It is almost impossible to say which of the two is the more popular with the general public."

"The Railway Station," by which this gallery is accordingly represented, will be familiar to most readers. The huge canvas was begun by Frith in August, 1860, and it was not completed until March, 1862, every one of the crowd of figures being painted from life. The scene is the terminus of the Great Western Railway at Paddington, which at first sight appeared so unpromising a subject for a picture that all the artist's friends whom Frith consulted warned him against his project of painting it, and he himself started the work full of doubts.

Financially speaking, at any rate, "The Railway Station" proved an unqualified success. It was sold to Flatau, a picture dealer, from a first sketch, for four thousand five hundred pounds, a price increased subsequently by seven hundred and fifty pounds on Frith agreeing not to have the work exhibited at the Royal Academy. When the picture was shown by Flatau at a special exhibition of its own, over twenty-five thousand people paid for admission in seven weeks, a large proportion of the visitors buying engravings. Flatau eventually sold the picture for a good round sum to Mr. Holloway, the pill-maker, and founder of the well-known ladies' college, and it passed with the rest of his collection into the art gallery, which is so important a feature of the institution.

The claims of nine or ten pictures were considered by Mr. A. G. Quigley, the Acting Curator of the Walker Gallery, Liverpool, before choosing "Dante's Dream," by Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Among others mentioned by him as competing for the appreciation of the general public were "Dante and Beatrice," by Henry Holliday, "The Triumph of the Innocents," by W. Holman Hunt, "Faithful unto Death," by Sir Edward Poynter, and "A Summer Night," by Albert Moore.

"Dante's Dream," which is so well known that it is not here reproduced, is the largest of Rossetti's pictures, although critical opinion is not unanimous in considering it the most important. It measures seven feet by ten feet six and a half inches. Its great size led to some curious vicissitudes in its ownership. Painted for Mr. William Graham, this gentleman found on getting the canvas home that none of his rooms was large enough to hold it, and it had to be hung upon the staircase. There it was not seen to good advantage, however, and Rossetti accordingly offered to take the picture back and to paint a smaller replica in its place. This offer was accepted and the picture was taken back to the painter's studio. Rossetti had some difficulty in disposing of it, and eventually sold it for fifteen hundred guineas, considerably less, it is believed, than the sum received from Mr. Graham. Some years later this second purchaser removed to a smaller house and the picture was again taken back by Rossetti in exchange for several smaller canvases. Finally, in 1881, it was bought for a thousand pounds—probably not a tenth of its value to-day—by the Liverpool Corporation on the proposition of a member who had happened to see the picture in Rossetti's studio.

"Dante's Dream" was the subject of a water-colour drawing by Rossetti as long ago as 1856. He made his first studies for the oil painting in 1870 and finished it at the end of the following year, his work on the picture being so strenuous as to cause a breakdown in his health.

All the figures in the picture were painted from Rossetti's personal friends, Mr. Forbes-Robertson, the actor, being the model for the figure of "Love." The picture depicts the vision related by Dante of Beatrice lying in death :—

"Then Love spoke this: 'Now all shall be made clear;
Come and behold our lady where she lies.'
Those idle phantasies
Then carried me to see my lady dead:
And then, standing at her head,
Her ladies put a white veil over her;
And with her was such very humbleness
That she appeared to say, 'I am at peace.'"

The Hidden Eyes

by

RICHARD CAMDEN

ILLUSTRATED BY

W·LUNT

WHEN Manlove had said: "Thank you, madam, the rooms will suit me"; and when he had paid one week ahead of time in lieu of reference, and had closed the door upon his landlady, he stood in a stone-like attitude, staring at the varnished panels, seeming to listen with a tense, absorbed hearing to the creak of the departing footsteps.

But in reality he heard no sound except a noise made by men tramping—tramping; and he saw—he saw himself amongst them, in a suit which was an abominable insult, on the march with the rest to the stone quarries.

He had been there not so many hours ago. For years and years he had existed in that Gehenna, with those dismal shades which once were men; he had lived down there in that negation of all sweetness and happiness; down in that pit, in that terrible twilight.

And now he was out again—what was left of him. And at this particular moment Manlove was wondering just how much of him did remain.

He murmured to himself:—

"I was twenty-six when I went; I am forty years of age now. Forty! Oh, God! Oh, my God!"

That cry came up out of him, out of his heart, like some deep and hollow moan from the bottom of a restless volcano.

He clenched his fists until the knuckles started; his eyes, which glowed as if with fever, commenced to protrude; he breathed stertorously; a dull red flush mounted to his forehead. So, he looked rather terrible, with that untamed glare of the brute starting from below his brows.

He became aware of this, and burst into a hard, hard laugh as if it amused him. He looked round and saw a mirror over the mantelpiece, and he went to it, tossing his hat on to the table.

He put his face close to the crystal and gazed long and intently at what he saw there. The world had called him a gentleman before it shut him out from decent things. Might he yet bear the impress of that former time? He saw a deep furrow in either cheek, a hollow by either temple; lines at the corners of his eyes; in the eyes an expression which was no cowed one, certainly, but which glimmered with something very much like ferocity; there was not much flesh upon his hard-set jaw-bone, which was blue with his shaven beard.

He realized that he was ugly; that deep smouldering passion, like a slack-banked fire, that all the cruel waste and bitter torment of those sped years, had left a mark, a sinister mark, upon him.

He turned away. Well, he was free now. Wasn't there any consolation in that? He saw the elm-tree tops sway in the public garden beyond his window; he heard the pleasant chatter of the London sparrows; he saw the serene clumps of fleecy clouds sail overhead on their eternal voyages; the social hum of human life floated up to his ears; these were books for him to read; they were chants to a rightly-tuned ear. Well?

"Damnation!" he cried in a choked voice, and he flung out gripped fists to the empty air. Chipped, red, bony fists of a man who had been a gentleman once.

He drew a deep breath as if relieved a trifle, by that galled cry, of a load that was strangling him. He turned again and saw a row of books in a case against the wall. He had been passionately fond of books before—then. He took up one and bent it open with a savage gesture.

Mrs. Gaskell's "Cranford." Old ladies chattered in it; gossiped amiably over their cups of tea. He had once found this book one of the fascinations of life; all this talk of garrulous fools, these petty squabbles of fools!

"Faugh!" He hurled the thing into a corner.

"MANLOVE JERKED THE DOOR OPEN, WITH A HOSTILITY READY FOR ANYONE WHO HAD PUT SO SPEEDY A TERMINATION ON HIS PRIVACY. A WOMAN WAS STANDING ON THE THRESHOLD."

And at that moment someone knocked at his door.

Manlove jerked it open, with a hostility ready for anyone who had put so speedy a termination on his privacy. A woman was standing on the threshold. He noticed first the baffling veil drawn down to her chin; then a faint emanation of some delicate perfume; then that she neither spoke nor moved. And abruptly he became aware that he was held by a like inaction. His mood had changed in a breath. In a flash he had become uneasy, agitated, almost afraid, with a flutter at his heart and an excitement sending a delicious thrill through his blood. He said, at last: "Won't you come in?"

His voice surprised himself. He hadn't spoken like that since he put off the clothes of civilized men.

The visitor bowed her head slightly and accepted the invitation. Manlove placed a chair for her by the side of the red-covered table in the middle of the sitting-room. She sank into this chair and sat there, immobile, speaking not a single word.

Manlove did not even wonder at this. He was perfectly satisfied just to have her there, in his room. She was a woman—a lady, he instinctively knew, for she had the graceful carriage of a lady. And she had come to him who, for a decade and a half, had lost all contact with charms of that kind. He regarded her steadily, without seeming to do so. She wore a well-fitting heliotrope costume, and she had coils of beautiful fair hair. There was a slip of fur fastened by an emerald brooch at her white throat, which was full and firm. Through the veil he could just perceive the scarlet of her lips; it left uncovered the delicate shells of her ears. Her small gloved hands rested listlessly on her knees. He permitted his eyes, which had not feasted on pictures like this for an eternity of exile, to keep roaming over her form, until a sense of shame darted through Manlove like a pang, and he felt the hot blood rush to his face.

He drew up a chair to the other side of the table. Behind him was the papered wall; behind his visitor was a pair of tapestry curtains hung on a brass rod, which covered a pair of

folding doors that were not generally used. Manlove rested his arms on the edge of the table and waited. He realized that his visitor was finding effort necessary to speak to him, and he was well content not to hurry her. At last she said, in a low, just-controlled voice :—

"You are George Manlove, of course?"

"No other."

"And you have been released from prison?"

"From Chains Prison—yes."

"You were there fourteen years."

"Fourteen eternities."

"You were tried and convicted of murder; you were sentenced to death, and then, owing to a recommendation to mercy, to penal servitude for life."

Manlove did not answer that, but his hands gripped the edge of the table as if he would splinter it.

"You pleaded not guilty at your trial, but the evidence, although circumstantial, was too strong for you. I cannot imagine how you have lived through the years that followed, for you were absolutely innocent of that crime."

Manlove drew in his breath as if touched by a hot iron. He stared across the table at the eyes which he saw glow behind the veil.

"*You* know that?" came his husky cry.

"I know it perfectly well."

"You could have saved me at the time?" He half rose from his seat.

"No. I found out the truth later—much later. I must ask you to believe me when I say that."

Manlove sank down again. A gust of storm which had torn through his brain, lulled. His visitor had turned in her chair so that she was now directly facing him. Her agitated hands pushed up her veil to her eyes but not above them. He saw the mobile lips tremble—soft and red, passionately alluring; and the perfume which seemed diffused from her dress, her hair, her breath, climbed to his brain and made him almost faint. He burst out, vehemently: "Oh, I believe you!" At the same instant he reached out to grasp her left hand, which she had placed upon the table. She drew it away in time, but gave not the slightest indication of fear. He could see her eyes shine steadily through her veil as she watched him. For ten seconds they looked at each other, wordless.

"Forgive me," said Manlove, thickly.

"What for?" was the immediate response.

Manlove got up, fumbled in his pocket for a packet of cigarettes, lighted one, and walked up and down the room. He realized that self-control was inclined to slip just beyond his hold. He suspected, with a slight shiver of repulsion, that years and years with the brutes had made a brute of him. He felt that, if he had succeeded in grasping that delicate gloved hand, he would not have let go readily; that he would almost certainly have caught her to him and crushed his kisses on her face. He was glad that hadn't happened. But it nearly had. What a flame! It had rushed up with a roar through reason and every sense which should have suffocated it. He was immensely thankful that she showed no fear of him. Possibly she understood. She made allowances. And she was nice. He hadn't the remotest doubt of *that*. Her voice, her gestures, the very way she sat there, waiting for him to calm himself, all appealed convincingly to his idea of sweetness in women.

Manlove tossed his cigarette into the fireplace and resumed his seat. He said, in a strong, clear voice :—

"MANLOVE STARED ACROSS THE TABLE AT THE EYES WHICH HE SAW GLOW BEHIND THE VEIL."

"It is pertectly true what you say—that I was wrongly condemned. I did not think there was anyone on earth believed it, with the exception of the guilty man—whoever he may be."

"Have you any idea who he is?"

"None. For a year after I went to Chains I turned the matter over in my mind until it became exhausted. Then I let it go."

"But that does not mean that you have ceased to care?"

"To care? Perhaps I do, perhaps I do not. I am like a dead man. I have come out of a sepulchre. Everything seems strange—save you, sitting there."

"I think I understand you. But you have returned. You have passed through the last extreme of suffering that can ever come to any man. You have passed through it, and, therefore, you will hold up your head again."

"That means that you want me to?"

"With all my heart and soul."

This time she offered Manlove her hand across the table. He took it and held it while he asked: "You are going to establish my innocence?"

"Do you wish it established?"

He flung up his head with a hard, cruel laugh. "I don't know that I care much," he answered, broodingly. "There is no one left who would rejoice particularly. I am a dead man, I tell you. I haven't a fine feeling remaining. I'm sort of numbed, paralyzed. I don't crave for vengeance or anything like that. I've been so long in the dark that I've come out blind; so long in the silence that I've come out deaf; so long amongst the beasts that I've come out——"

"Hush! All that will change."

"Questionable. Well, tell me, are you going to prove my innocence?"

"No."

"Ah! You do not know where the crime should be laid?"

"Oh, yes, I know that."

"What! And you will not speak?"

"Not one word—save here, and to you."

Manlove stared at that, his brows coming together. "All right," said he, gloomily. "I am listening. But first allow me a request: will you let me see your face?"

"Forgive me. I cannot do that."

Manlove's frown deepened. "Well, go on," said he.

"I will do so. It was about a year ago when I learned that the guilt of blood was not yours. The insensate talk of a delirious person first suggested the truth to me. I nursed him through an illness which finally ended in his death. From the stage of a delirious frenzy he emerged with a perfectly clear mind, which lucid interval lasted until the end. During that time of comparative calm he was haunted by a suspicion that his secret had slipped him. Possibly my manner created this fear. He tested me by one or two remarks of an indirect kind; and, finally, sure that he would not recover, he made to me a confession."

"Why do you keep back his name?" questioned Manlove.

"Because it will not help you to know it. If he had put down his shameful story in writing; or if I had had time to write it for his signature, then the consequences would be helpful to you. But he only confessed it in a few half-broken sentences, in a few words wrested from him by the dark. Of what value will this be in the eyes of the law? It will be of no value at all."

"Then why have you come to me with the story?"

"I will give my second of two reasons first; for the year since I heard the truth your name and your sufferings have never left my mind. When you came out, therefore, I wanted to see you; I wanted to tell you what had happened; dreading to find you a broken man, I felt my duty was to bind up your wounds."

Manlove bent his head. He did not answer, and for a long time there was a silence between them. At last he said:—

"Was this man your husband?"

"I am not married."

"He was your lover, then?"

"No, he was not. Nor even a relative. Please be satisfied with that."

"All right; I will not question that further. And your first, your principal reason for coming to me?"

"It is this: he who confessed died very wealthy. Almost his last breath was used to entreat me to remember you."

"Ah!" said Manlove, flushing deeply, clenching his fists.

"He bequeathed to me a considerable sum," went on the visitor, in a voice thrilling with earnestness. "And he asked me to take every care that you should not want. I promised. My subsequent intention was to forward you a certain amount at regular intervals; but I realized afterwards that such a procedure would be sure to make you suspect, being innocent, the cause which prompted such assistance; in that case you might have looked in a wrong direction; you might even have taken some imprudent action in the matter. This reflection, together with my second reason, brought me here."

"Not to insult me," said Manlove, thickly, with that dark flush still shadowing his forehead.

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that I prefer your second reason, that is all. You said that I have been constantly in your mind. I do not choose to think that you spoke lightly. I am going to believe that your heart was in those words. It means much to me. That need not surprise you. A wild beast which has snapped its chain; that is how my kind is classed. But you came to me directly; you affirmed my innocence; you express your sympathy, your compassion, which is like one star in the cloud-wrack to a lost mariner. But can you understand the value I set upon this? Can you put yourself in my place? Can you imagine what they have made of me? And when you go, what shall I do? But all this will not give you a glimmer of my meaning. Do you know what I should like best on earth? To lock that door and never let you go!"

She sat very still, watching Manlove, absorbing

his heated words, unscared by his returning vehemence. She answered, when he had finished :—

"If I had not put myself in your place I should not be here."

"Wrong! You would have kept away."

"And why?"

"Because you would have seen me as I am. My soul! I have spent fourteen years in prison for a crime I didn't commit! I went in young; I actually had ideals—ideals of life, of women, of honour. They have been blasted in a flame—a withering flame. What kind of sport have the gods had with me? An infernal whirlwind keeps roaring through my brain. Either I am going mad, or——" he checked himself with extreme abruptness; he seemed to stiffen in a curious fashion, and a tense, an extraordinary expression froze in his eyes, which looked past his visitor's head.

She waited a moment, but as Manlove appeared unable to continue, she answered: "You are echoing the voice of despair, but it will not always be your companion."

"MANLOVE RUSHED IN AGAIN, STRIKING THREE TIMES WITH ALL HIS FORCE, HURLING THE OTHER BACK UPON THE TABLE."

With an effort Manlove turned his gaze from where it had become almost fixed. He said, in a suddenly altered tone, in an abruptly, perfectly calm voice :—

"You were about to offer me money."

"The help I promised to give you—yes."

"You have a sum in your mind?"

"Two thousand pounds. If that is not sufficient——"

"I will accept it. After all, it will be an act of justice to which I am fully entitled. Suppose I write out a receipt for it now?"

Without waiting for an answer he crossed the room to where he had dropped his topcoat over the back of a chair. From the breast-pocket he

drew a letter-wallet. He returned with this to his seat at the table, opposite his visitor. From the soft leather case he extracted a sheet of paper blank on one side. Over this he bent, writing with a pencil. When he had finished he said, with deliberation :—

" Two thousand pounds is a large sum, and calls for some formality. I suggest this written, rough draft." The visitor picked up the paper and read as follows :—

"Keep your head. Remain absolutely calm. The folding doors behind your chair have been opened, and a man with a pistol in his hand has just peeped at you through the curtains. If you know who he is, write it down. Be very brief."

She read ; she remained perfectly still, bending her fair head over the slip of paper, not the least sound escaping her parted lips.

Manlove went on, aloud :—

" A rough draft, only, as I say. Modify it as you think fit."

He pushed his pencil towards her. It fell from her gloved fingers. He recovered it. She held it at the second attempt and began to write. Manlove waited, tilting back his chair, looking up at the ceiling.

" I recommend this slight alteration," said the other, in a low voice which she struggled in vain to steady.

Manlove took the paper and read the following lines :—

" I rely upon you. Do nothing without thought. The man is there without my knowledge. He has come to hear what I said to you. My story was not strictly true. There was no confession of the murder spoken to me. It was planned and accomplished by a secret society, and the guilt made to appear yours. I was one of them, but I found out the truth only a month ago, and that crime enforced their propaganda. I am suspected of treachery. I dared not tell you the facts, but I felt deeply that I shared responsibility for your wrong, and I wanted to help you. So I composed my tale accordingly. I am probably lost. That man will follow me to the world's end. My coming to you will never be forgiven. I had made arrangements to leave the country directly after this interview; to go away secretly. It is too late. You see I am already shadowed."

Manlove read slowly, stroking his chin with his left hand, his face void of expression. He knew perfectly well that a pair of eyes glittered between the curtains over the folding doors. The interloper had found a way into the room beyond them.

Manlove read slowly. Not a quivering nerve twitched in his face. But one of those who had flung him so heartlessly into the abyss was hiding five paces off ; and there came up over Manlove's mind, darkening his brain, like a tropic storm, a sirocco, a desire to glut his vengeance by tearing out that man's heart through his gaping throat.

He said, very quietly :—

" I accept your modification, making, however, one slight change." And he added a few words, pushing the paper back again to his companion.

This time she read as follows :—

" You shall go away, as you have arranged. Leave that to me. *May I come with you ?* "

Manlove handed back the paper. Again the woman's head drooped over it. She saw that last line, the concluding question, which he had thickly underscored, and which was a fierce cry of longing. A stress of emotion held her without word or movement. More than a minute passed before she was able to write on the small space remaining. She pushed the paper to Manlove, her lips shaping some conventional remark to maintain the subterfuge, but no sound escaping them.

Manlove read her answer in the following words :—

" You may. Join me at Euston Station. The boat train leaves in fifteen minutes."

She watched Manlove's eyes travel swiftly over the words, she saw them flash with an inexpressible joy, and then she rose and glided swiftly from the room. At the same instant Manlove rushed at the folding-doors and tore the curtains aside.

He cried out with the snarl of a hunger-bitten wolf as it fastens on its prey : " Come out of it, you cursed, skulking dog ! "

There was a strangled gasp as his fingers closed upon the intruder's throat. Into the room he dragged him, shaking him like a rat in a terrier's grip. With a swoon darkening his eyes the man struck blindly with the pistol in his hand. Manlove gave to it, hit over the temple, staggering back a yard and forced to release his hold. The other, dizzily aware that his was the next second or two, lurched towards the door, with wide-spread arms, groping. Manlove recovered and rushed in again, striking three times with all his force, hurling the other back upon the table, upon which he sprawled, his ashen face turned to the ceiling. He slid off, dragging the red table-cover with him, and collapsed, huddled and inert, upon the carpet.

Manlove leaned down, feeling for the heart's action. He muttered as he straightened himself : " In half an hour he'll get up again."

He listened, wiping the sweat from his forehead. There had been a noise. If interruption came he would run for it ; otherwise he would go easy, wanting to steady his jangled nerves.

Nothing happened. He pulled on his topcoat, took up his hat and stick, left the room, closing the door softly, went downstairs and into the street, into the fading day. He had used up five minutes of his fifteen. He walked down the street and saw three taxi-cabs in line, and he approached the first, moving with enforced, calm deliberation.

" Euston Station," said he, coolly. " A sovereign for every minute less than ten."

He closed the door and sank back upon the cushioned seat. Waves of exaltation kept floating over him, like an exhausted racer who sprawls over the tape. The past ? It was a night-piece, a nocturne ; the first dolorous movement of a symphony. An adventure, rather ; the first clouded, bitter chapters of the story where the woman waits at the end.

H.G WELLS as HISTORIAN

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE FAMOUS NOVELIST, WHOSE LATEST WORK IS

A UNIVERSAL HISTORY.

by *Arthur Lynch*

With Photographs specially taken for THE STRAND MAGAZINE *by A. Willett, Dunmow.*

The Great Epic of the Races of Mankind—A New Mode of Presenting History — A World-Cinematograph — A New Idea in Maps and Charts—The March of Civilization—History Made as Thrilling as Romance.

THE GREAT EPIC OF THE RACES OF MANKIND.

IF to talk with Lincoln on a log was a liberal education, it was a delightful holiday in philosophy to sit with Mr. Wells or stroll about the grounds of Easton Glebe in his company. He discoursed with equal ease on modern events and ancient happenings, and proved, by the most natural of arguments, that judgment does not necessarily exclude wit.

Perhaps at another time I may endeavour to reproduce the force and point of his familiar conversation, but to-day I feel sweeping over my mind like a Beethoven symphony the great epic of the races of mankind which his descriptions evoked. As he unrolled the story, I had the sense of man's destiny being controlled by something that looms out beyond the wars and conflicts of interest that make the staple of ordinary histories, and I felt assured that here we were at the beginning of a new phase of our education in this subject of endless fascination.

"What is this history you are writing?" I asked in casual style when we had finished the programme for the game of ball.

"Oh," he replied, "the history has been

in my mind in some form or other for many years. It became stimulated by watching the development of various young people, including my own sons. I felt the necessity of finding some wider basis of history on which their knowledge should hang."

"Had any book suggested to you the idea of such a history?"

"No one book in particular," replied Mr. Wells, "but Winwood Reed's "Martyrdom of Man" was one of those that turned my attention afresh to the question. The idea took shape of some book of general history, but during the period that I had to do with the propaganda of the League of Nations every day brought the matter home vividly to my mind.

"I am not particularly fond of the phrase: League of Nations. I am rather forced to the conclusion that we must have some sort of world administration different from the conceptions of nations to-day, and we shall be exposed to terrible dangers as long as the present state of affairs exists. When we talk of the League of Nations we are occupied in creating alliances, and we salve our motives with a sort of national selfishness. The popular idea in Europe of a League of Nations seems to be a sort of law court in which nations will lie and litigate against each other instead of going to war.

"My waste-paper basket is full every day with propaganda material, pamphlets and the rest, from Czecho-Slovaks, Italians, Greeks, Jugo-Slavs, advocating the claims of their respective nationalities, yet none of these propagandists are thinking of the peace of the world, without which Czecho-Slovaks, Greeks, and Italians are doomed to intolerable disasters and miseries. National egotism is bred by the wickedness of man, no doubt, but it is enormously developed by the intense nationalization of the teaching of history.

A NEW MODE OF PRESENTING HISTORY.

"It became urgent in my mind that we had to get a move on in countering this mode of teaching national history as a necessary first step to promoting a basis of international understanding."

"The waste-paper basket did something to bring your ideas to a head?"

"Yes. I took up this question of Universal History in a new form, and with one idea, which had not occurred to me at first, of doing something which would really affect the teaching of history in schools and colleges.

"One objection made is that Universal History is too big a subject to teach. Certainly it will have to be treated in a different way from that of the teaching of national history. However, I had the opportunity and the time, and I determined to make the experiment. I wanted to put forward a view of Universal History that would not merely be an essay, but something sufficiently clear and exact to be of educational value."

"Is Sir Walter Raleigh's 'History of the World' of any account? He appears to have had the sense of the unity of history; had he any governing philosophical notion?"

"I don't know. I have read him. The book gives the impression of having been hastily written, and under unfavourable conditions, and, of course, without access to the proper authorities. In modern times, especially within the last forty years, there has been a good deal of excellent work in history, seeking accuracy and presenting new views, but there has been no attempt to get all this history together as one subject. For example, in the 'Encyclopædia

FRONT VIEW OF EASTON GLEBE, MR. WELLS'S HOME IN ESSEX.

Britannica' you can get a vast amount of good historical writing, dealing with each nation in turn, but the whole Encyclopædia does not make a history of the nations.

"When you conceive of Universal History properly you see it not as a collection of separate histories, but as something synthetically new. History is a science in itself, just as chemistry is a science in itself, apart from the achievements of individual chemists. From this sense of unity great consequences flow. Universal Peace, as Kant pointed out long ago, will be found to depend on Universal History."

"I know that some of the French historians, Seignobos, for example, have been stirred to some extent by the same suggestions. Have the Germans, with their famous organizing capacity, done anything in this direction?"

"Well, perhaps the nearest approach is the work of Friedrich Ratzel—'The History of Mankind.' The idea has been in the air."

"And side by side with this the minute study of our period, as, for instance, with Houssaye, who devotes a big volume to 1814?"

"Yes, these minute studies aid the general task, partly by giving precision to statements, and also by cutting away falsities, baseless legends, and so forth. It is obviously impossible for one man to read all these minute histories, but they may be studied by collaborators who advise in regard to errors that may creep into the general exposition.

"The great difficulty has been to make the history clear and consecutive and educative, and yet keep it within reasonable limits. This book I have been writing will run to the length of a very long novel, say 350,000 words. That is about the length of Tolstoy's 'War and Peace.'"

A WORLD-CINEMATOGRAPH.

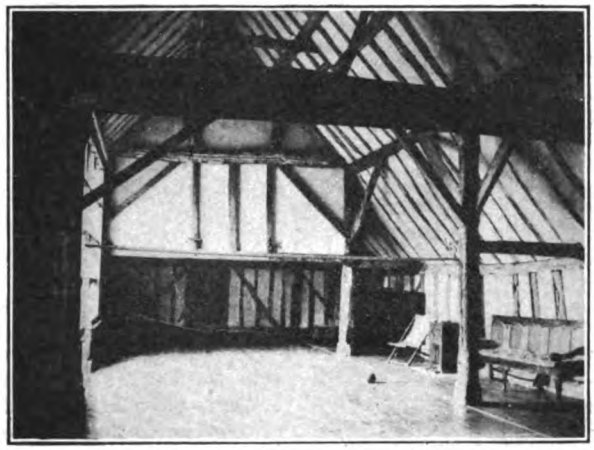
My philosopher—the word as applied to Wells is my own and I will stick to it—then showed me a series of maps which he had in preparation for this history, and I feasted my eyes on them as he explained their meaning. It was Dr. Arnold, I think, who spoke of his deep emotions on looking at a map.

ANOTHER VIEW OF MR. WELLS'S HOUSE AND GARDEN.

All those who can read maps will agree with him. Here on these maps, and the accompanying charts, I saw the successive stages of civilization moving before my eyes like shadowy films of a world-cinematograph. Mr. Wells's Universal History, it should be mentioned, does not begin with such recent happenings as the foundation of Rome, for example. He goes back, as Genesis does, to the beginning of the world. "This outline deals with ages and races and nations, where the ordinary history deals with reigns and pedigrees and campaigns."

"I remember," said Wells, "laughing at a story of mine of a German professor's thoroughness when he informed us that we had two ears—a right ear and a left ear. One of my teachers once began a lecture by saying that the earth had spun on its axis for millions of years. There was loud

applause and cries of 'Good old earth'! But even for the purpose of human history, it is necessary that we should have an idea of the world's probable origin, its relationship to the moon, its gradual cooling from incandescence, and some realization of the vast ages through which it spun before its crust was cool enough for the first hot rain to trickle over its surface and form the first puddle that became the ocean. For scores and perhaps hundreds of millions of years the early rocks were forming without any trace of life. Then life began."



THE INTERIOR OF THE BARN, IN WHICH GAMES OF BALL ARE PLAYED.

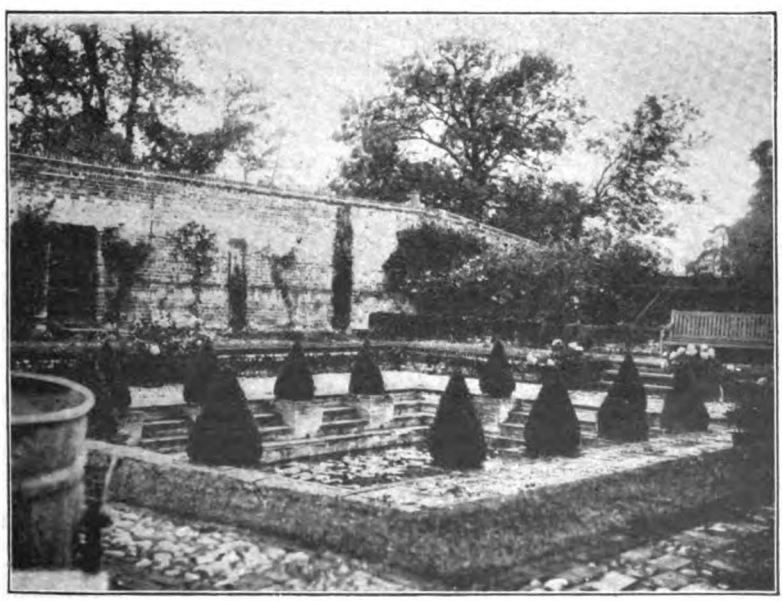
"Have you any theory of its origin?"

"Not for the purpose of this history. Of its origin and nature we have still to learn, but of its early beginnings it is now possible to tell a plain story. Reference is made to what we know of the process of the slow creeping up of life upon the land from its first beginnings in the shallow seas of that ancient time; it is a very curious and fascinating process to relate. When the world was perhaps three-quarters of its present age, there were creeping amphibians among the swamp forests and dragon-flies in the air. All this is now a tellable story, and so, too, is the story of the spreading of life to the hillsides in the age of Reptiles, and how, as the great cycles of climate changed from an equable warmth to extremer conditions, the Reptiles made way for the mammals and birds of the forests and grassy plains that followed."

"If this world was made for man he was introduced with some pomp at least?"

"Yes. This is no catalogue of incoherent marvels. It is a prelude of astonishing depth and beauty to the entrance of man upon the scene, and the mind that has not apprehended it sees history flatly and poorly for the need of it."

The last glacial period is many chapters on in the story, and Wells has something interesting to say on the Neanderthal man.



THE LILY-POND AT EASTON GLEBE.

He has read more books apparently on the Neanderthal man than some teachers have read on Napoleon.

A NEW IDEA IN MAPS AND CHARTS.

Then, in a manner recalling Humboldt's "Cosmos," he traces out the influence on races and nations of the geological and geographical conditions. Here it is that one gets the touch of suggestion of man being led hand in hand by something bigger and deeper than party intrigues. These maps show the incursions of successive races of conquerors into Europe, and nothing more than these graphic representations brings home that universality of history that Mr. Wells seeks to throw into relief. In the preparation of these maps he has been aided by Mr. Horrabin, who has brought clarity to what otherwise might appear inextricable confusion. The maps and diagrams are part and parcel of the history; they are inseparable from the text.

Mr. Wells, who has had practical experience in education, hopes that this new manner of presenting history will ultimately result in the adoption of Universal History as an alternative course in University examinations.

The historian looked bright and cheerful enough in his flannels, but when I had looked through these maps, I remarked, "You have worked!"

"Yes," he replied, with conviction. "All this has meant an enormous amount of work. The actual writing took me a year and a half. The book was begun before 'The Undying Fire.' My task is really that of a compiler, and there was in existence a great deal of good work in separate studies which had never been digested.

"I have been lucky to have associated with me as editors four distinguished gentlemen: Sir Ray Lankester, Sir H. H. Johnstone, Professor Gilbert Murray, and Mr. Ernest Barker, and the work has also been aided by the advice of Professor Myers, Sir Denison Ross, Sir Richard Gregory, and Mr. Philip Guadalla."

We played ball, we strolled about the garden still blooming in its roses, and to the accompaniment of thrushes and bullfinches we talked of history and historians.

Mr. Wells believes that his book, though the first of its kind, will not be the last. It will give rise to a great amount of new work, and once the main lines are settled there will be a field for scholarship in giving precision and definiteness to details, as well as in strengthening the feeling of a continuous chain of history. He has great hopes of some of the young men of Oxford whose talents are already known to a small circle, but who will before very long become appreciated by a larger public.

THE MARCH OF CIVILIZATION.

And in the easy way in which he surveyed the march of civilization he turned from modern Oxford to ancient Greece. Herodotus he found especially interesting, for in addition to his desire for truth in his narrative he exhibits large general views. Herodotus, in insisting upon the superiority of the Greeks over the Persians, gave course to the sentiments that found their realization in the conquests of Alexander.

"The writing of history is a creative work. For example, if empires be held together simply by the power of a conqueror, they disintegrate; but a nation held together by a national history has much greater cohesion. That accounts in part for the solidity of the Chinese, and the resistance of the Jews to dissolution. The Bible is to them, apart from the question of inspiration, a great national history. On the other hand, the Babylonian and the various Indian empires were held together by monarchical authority. A nation should be not monarch-knit, but history-knit."

"I can't help asking the question," I said at length. "Has this history given you more trouble to write than any of your novels?"

"Well," replied Wells, smilingly, "in a novel we can make our own facts; in history we have to be careful and accurate, and this involves an enormous amount of drudgery. I have found the London Library my main support, but the *Times* Book Club has also been helpful."

All this conversation left a deep impression on my mind. Here is certainly the right conception of history; why had it not occurred to others in this form? The magnitude of the task would certainly deter any but those capable of "toiling terribly." But in addition to this I think it required the scientific mind with which Mr. Wells has been endowed, and the habit of seeking deep generalizations, which his early scientific training had instilled into him.

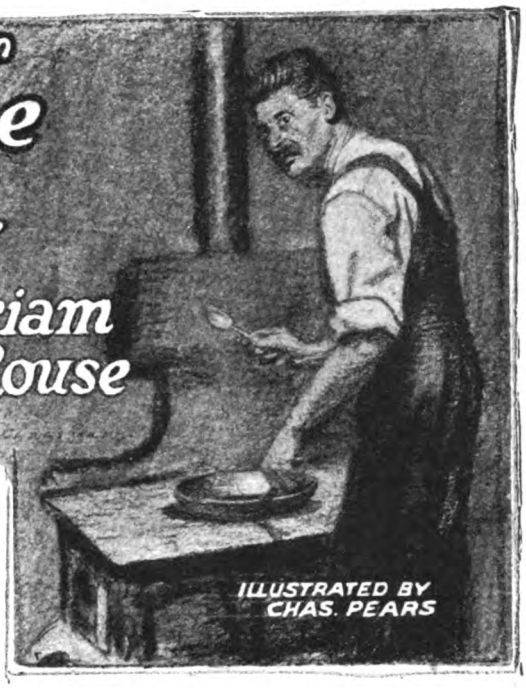
HISTORY MADE AS THRILLING AS ROMANCE.

And then there is another aspect of the question. A work of this sort must not be dry-as-dust. There must be something of the spirit which caused Alexandre Dumas to declare that he had raised history to the dignity of romance. Most historians fail by writing of events in a pompous, ceremonial fashion and giving us lay figures and lifeless effigies in place of men. In that case there is a veritable sacrifice of truth, but that error has been avoided by the master who has already played on so many notes of feeling and passion in the wide gamut of life.

PETER the DEVIL

by

William Mirriam Rouse



THE House of the Intendant still stands upon the Island of Orleans, in the parish of St. Jean. Its three-foot walls were raised in the days when the Bourbons sent conscienceless men to rule in Canada, and the things that the habitants tell to-day of that time and of the House of the Intendant are not pleasant to delicate ears.

It was quite fitting that Peter the Devil should make his home in such a house—although no one thought of that when he was plain Pierre Duchesne, a promising and newly-married young farmer. Where could Peter find a better trysting-place for his undoubted dealings with Satan? No one in the parish doubted that he had given up his soul in exchange for sundry benefits—else whence came the tremendous strength that enabled him to lift three times as much as an ordinary man? Whence came the gold that he was said to have hidden in a room for ever closed—and whence his invariable success with his crops?

Pierre Duchesne knew quite well that the devil was considered to be his partner. He knew that to this supposed partnership was attributed the disappearance of his young wife Mathilde, who had vanished at the same time that Henri Giroux, Duchesne's friend, went to the United States to make his fortune. The people of St. Jean, even though pious to the last man and woman, did not judge Mathilde harshly in the circumstances. Peter the Devil, understanding all this, smiled to himself. He knew something that neither the gossips of St. Jean nor anyone else in the world knew.

Fifteen years of thinking of the past, and of living alone under the shadow of an evil reputation, had indeed made Pierre something of a devil. He hated mankind.

Fifteen years of this; and then, in the middle of a bad winter, a seemingly small thing happened which stirred up the dregs of Pierre Duchesne's bitterness and, before the end of the affair had been reached, tossed him about as a snowflake is tossed by the north-east wind. It began with a faint pounding against the solid planks of the kitchen door.

Peter the Devil, cooking his supper by candle-light, hesitated. Of course, something was outside, trying to get shelter from the cold and snow-filled wind, which might easily mean death. If he had been sure that it was a human being outside, he would have paid no attention. But it might be a dog, throwing itself in frantic leaps against the barrier, and Duchesne had no desire to let a dog freeze to death.

At first, struggling against the blast that swept into the room, he thought the heap upon the stone step was a dog; but when his fumbling hand gripped cloth, he knew that he had made an unfortunate mistake. Nevertheless he yanked the object inside and sent it sprawling across the kitchen floor. There it lay, a boy of sixteen or eighteen, whimpering for all the world like a puppy. Perhaps it was because of this that Duchesne at length raised the youngster and set him in a chair by the stove. Then he went out into the night and came back with a pail of snow.

"Rub your hands and feet!" he commanded. But the boy remained motionless, looking at him with pain-filled black eyes set in a face framed by tight-curling black hair.

"*Sacré!*" cried Duchesne. "You idiot!" Thereupon he himself stripped off the

mittens and moccasins of his unwelcome guest and rubbed the frostbitten spots till the blood returned to them.

"Brat!" growled Peter the Devil, when he had finished. "What are you doing here? You do not live in St. Jean!"

"No," answered the boy, in a voice still wrenched by pain. "I came over from the mainland; I crossed the St. Lawrence with a carter, before the storm broke."

"The mainland, eh?" looking at him searchingly. "You came from Quebec, or farther. A youngster like you, slender enough to break in a good wind, was never bred in the country."

"Quebec, yes. I'm looking for work."

"And the police of Quebec are looking for you?"

Red came into the beardless cheeks, but the black eyes did not shift.

"All I ask is work, monsieur. None of the woodchoppers on the Côte de Beaupré would take me, I am so small."

"What did you do there in Quebec?"

"Monsieur, I beg you to give me work! I am honest!"

Duchesne shrugged. "Why did you come here?"

"I lost my way." Tears gathered in the boy's eyes. "Emile Laplante is my name, monsieur, and truly I can work hard. Let me stay here."

"Here?" Peter the Devil let out a bellow of laughter, and turned to the cooking of his neglected supper. So absurd did that suggestion seem to him that as he went about his housework he chuckled with the disagreeable mirth which the parish knew well. But he nevertheless set out a bowl of *soupe aux pois* for the boy Laplante, and put the knife and the loaf in the centre of the table. Emile ate in silence, ravenously; and as soon as he had finished he rolled up his sleeves and made ready to wash the dishes. Nothing could have done more to break the crust of Pierre Duchesne; and after the dishes had been washed, Pierre found himself, as he smoked, really considering whether it would not be wise to let the boy stay. He could do the little drudgeries which Duchesne held in detestation. It was well worth thinking over.

Yet in the plan there was danger to his peace of mind. The boy would be a connecting link with the world which Duchesne had renounced; he might turn out to be a thief and a liar and hard to get rid of. Thus Peter the Devil speculated as he watched Emile nodding and dozing in his chair, exhausted, and yet too polite to ask that he might go to bed. At length Duchesne arose and threw down a blanket beside the stove.

"Sleep there," he said. "I've only one bed."

With a groan of relief Emile Laplante rolled himself up in the blanket, and when Duchesne looked back from the stairway door he was fast asleep.

Of the House of the Intendant Pierre Duchesne used, for living purposes, only two rooms. One was the great raftered kitchen, and the other his sleeping-room directly above. There was another room, with which there will be concern later, that he had once put to a kind of use not connected with living; and it was toward this room that his thoughts turned as he lay in the darkness and weighed the advantage of the boy's services against the disadvantage of having another human being in the house. What if the boy had been sent there by someone to smell out the gold which Peter the Devil was said to have saved through his years of partnership with Satan? Of course, his nose would find its way to the door of the third room—the door which had, as people said, remained closed these many years.

Pierre smiled as he visualized the frail strength of the boy trying to open that iron-bound and bolt-studded door; yet he rose from his bed and went noiselessly down to the kitchen. He listened; and from the direction of the stove came the regular breathing of his visitor. What folly! Who among the habitants of the island would plan robbery? And on the mainland they would not be likely to know of Pierre Duchesne and his legend, much less in a big place such as the boy Laplante evidently came from.

So Duchesne went to bed and to sleep; and in the morning he was surprised to find that Emile had made up the fire and put water on to boil. The closed door, which was set into the masonry of the kitchen wall farthest from the stove, remained as it always had been, and Duchesne smiled in grim contempt of his own suspicions. He prepared breakfast, and the two of them ate in silence. But after breakfast, as Pierre lighted his pipe, he spoke.

"If you want to work," he said, "and work hard, you may stay here for a time—at least, until the weather grows better. But you must not go to the village, except when I send you, and you must not get any of the brats from there to come here."

"*Oh, merci!*" cried Emile, with a quiver of the underlip. "Thank you very much, monsieur. I will do all that you say, gladly! I have had trouble——"

A weakling, thought Duchesne, as the boy's voice broke and he turned away. Yet, strangely, Peter the Devil found himself

pitying the youngster. No wonder the woodchoppers would not hire him, with his rounded chin and his narrow shoulders.

That settled the arrangement, so far as words were concerned—but not with regard to deeds. All that day, until early darkness fell, Emile Laplante shovelled snow and fed the stock, and brought in wood from the shed, until at the supper table he fell asleep with his head beside his untasted soup. Pierre Duchesne was rather pleased than otherwise, and when he went up to bed he left the boy sleeping there with his head on the table. But he did take thought to throw a blanket over the youngster's shoulders, for the fire went very low toward morning.

Many following days were a repetition of that first as to the routine of work, eat, and sleep. But there were changes which crept in slowly, and almost against the will of Duchesne, who himself produced them. Some impulse which at first he fought prompted him to probe into the education of Emile, and he found that the boy was barely able to read and write. Thereupon Peter the Devil set himself the strange task of schoolmaster. From a store-room he dug out a trunkful of books, and each evening there was a short lesson in such things as Duchesne had learned in his schooldays.

It was toward the end of February that Peter the Devil was jolted out of his folly. On that day he had softened outwardly for the first time, softened sufficiently to permit Emile to remain indoors and study through all the afternoon while he himself did the necessary work. That night there was geography and the history of France; and after Henry IV. and the products of South America had been dealt with, Duchesne went to bed—but not at once to sleep.

It was a night such as those who have the love of the North in their veins know as a lovers' night. Duchesne swung open his window and breathed in the air of the *belle* Canada that he loved. Sixteen or seventeen years ago it had been that for a woman he gave up all that his world could offer. On such nights as this, identical with the night on which he had taken her away from Montreal, his soul choked with bitterness, and the taste of lifelong failure was in his mouth.

It was while he leaned with his face to the window-opening that there came to his keen ears the crunching sound of a step. Snow-shoes, and on the feet of one not well accustomed to their use, he judged by the occasional clatter of wood against wood. Hence a stranger in St. Jean—a stranger to the island. The steps became more distinct. They were light enough to have been almost inaudible to the ears of a man not bred to the open, but to Peter the Devil they sounded upon the night with a voice of warning.

He had no tangible cause for apprehension, but he had always felt that sooner or later either the gossips or those who desired his fabled treasure would bring force against him. So he was alert always; now he tiptoed down from his darkened room in thick-stockinged feet which gave no sound upon the stairs. It was in his mind to arouse Emile and set him to help watch the prowlers.

But in the doorway at the bottom of the stairs he held himself motionless—at first astounded, and then shaken by a deeper wrath than any he had known since that far day when he became Peter the Devil.

The outside door was open, and in it, outlined against the starlight, was the figure of a man of bulk and height. Emile Laplante was just within the room and facing the other.

"Three times we have sent to you," growled the man in the doorway, "and you have told us to wait. Do you think we are going to wait all the winter?"

"*Mon Dieu!*"—from Emile. "Three times I have told you that I could not get the key to the locked room!"

Traitor, thought Duchesne, as his hands involuntarily clenched. He would wring the neck of the little dastard. But the voices cut through his thoughts.

"You are getting soft on this big miser!" sneered the stranger. "You! Angèle Caron! Angèle Caron, who might be queen of the rue Petit Champlain!"

"I am not a traitor!"

Duchesne questioned his ears. Almost he questioned the fact that he himself was standing there at the foot of the stairs in his own house, listening to certain persons who wished to gain entrance to the room at the end of the kitchen. Emile a girl! The idea was unthinkable, and yet——

He remembered that on that first night the hands and feet had seemed too delicate for those of a boy—then, too, the slenderness, the soft curves of the face. Again he had been made a fool of by a woman.

"*Parbleu!*" the man was saying. "I do not believe that you are a traitor. But you must get the key to-night!"

Suddenly it occurred to Duchesne that he had mentally accused her of being a traitor to him, while she hotly denied being a traitor to the cause of this would-be robber. He smiled, with the renewed bitterness of the past burning into his heart.

"Give me a little while—a half-hour!" pleaded the girl. "Go away from the house. I will get him up on some pretext and get the key, but keep well away from here,

for he has eyes and ears like those of the panther."

"*Bien!*" We'll go away and come back in half an hour. But then there must be no fooling! The village is asleep, and we can do what we like here. Do you understand that?"

"Yes," answered Angèle. "You will find everything ready for you."

The outer door closed. Duchesne heard the girl fumbling for a candle, and noiselessly he crept back to his room. A moment later a dim light came up the stairway, and the voice which he had learned to know as that of Emile called softly:—

"Monsieur Duchesne!"

"Yes!" answered Pierre, with a gruff sleepiness. "What is it? What are you doing up at this time of night?"

"I have heard something—outside the house."

"Name of a dog! There are no bears on the Ile d'Orléans! Are you a girl?"

Chuckling with anticipation that savoured of the devil from whom he had been named, he swung from the bed where he had thrown himself and went to the lower floor—not, however, without first having put on his shoes so that he might be well foundationed for what was to come. In the light of two candles Angèle Caron stood with her hands pressed to her bosom, almost swaying with the force of emotion which she sought to repress. In that attitude she would have betrayed herself to the most unobservant eyes; her dissembled boyishness had utterly slipped away. That she did not realize this was apparent.

Duchesne stood gazing into the depths of her black eyes; his gaze dwelt upon the rounded throat, the clustering curls. He had grown to the boy Emile Laplante with a strange attachment which he had denied to himself even as it grew. Now he understood. He, Peter the Devil, was still a fool. He had permitted himself to love for the second time—but he had the satisfaction of knowing that he hated the woman he loved even as at first.

"Monsieur Duchesne——"

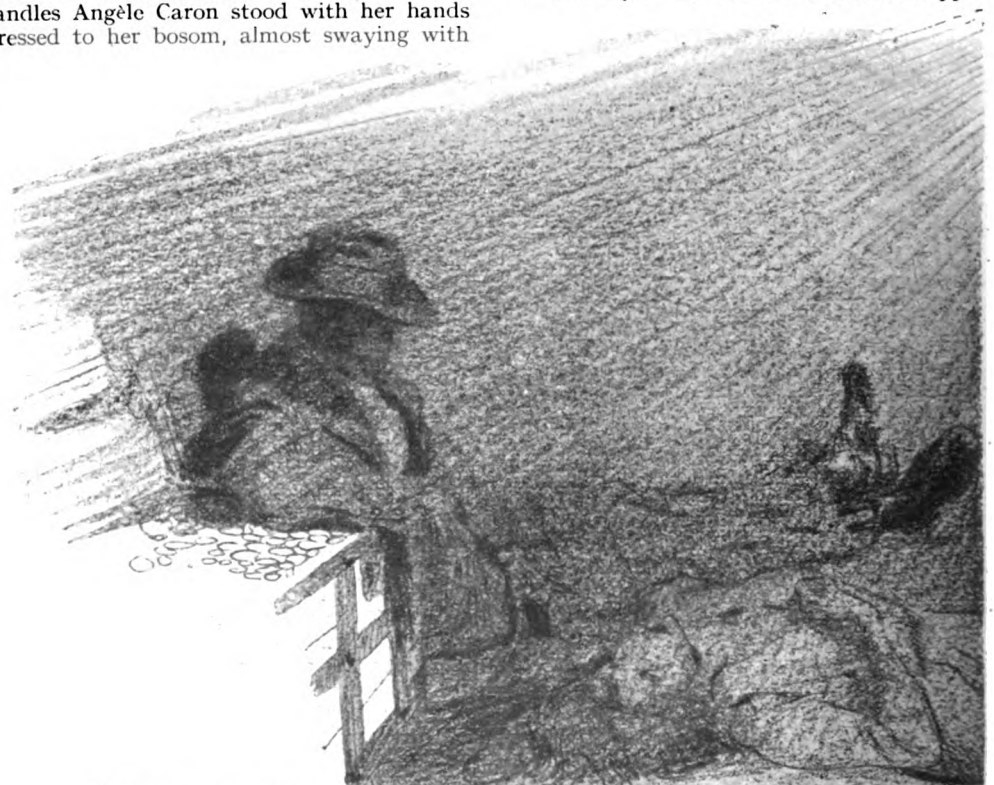
"Silence!" he thundered. "I've had enough of your acting! Be done with it! Queen of the rue Petit Champlain! Queen of a gang of cut-throats!"

"Oh, no! Monsieur, hear me——"

"I have heard enough," he growled, gaining control of himself. "You will hear me now, before they come back."

"But, monsieur——"

You will keep your tongue still, mademoiselle, or I will wring your neck immediately!" From his breast he whipped



"WITHIN THE STRONG-BOX, FILLING IT ALMOST TO THE LID, GLEAMED COINS OF ALL

a cord from the end of which dangled a key of ancient size and design. "Come, Mademoiselle the Spy! You shall see the treasure of the locked room!"

Seizing her arm, he pulled her to the end of the room and fitted the key to the lock. Then, with a curse at his forgetfulness, he ran back to the stove, snatched up a knot of pitch-pine from the pile, and thrust it among the coals. With the smoking, flaring torch in one hand he set his shoulder against the door of the third room and pushed with all his strength. Slowly the door gave inward. He pushed the girl ahead of him, and stood with his shoulder against the door and the torch held high.

The yellow, shifting light sought all four corners of that little room—a room of solid masonry without opening save the one by which Duchesne and the girl had entered. The light played upon the dark sides of a strong-box set against the wall. The splintered top of the box was thrown back, and the axe which had violated it lay upon the floor. Within the strong-box, filling it almost to the lid, gleamed coins of all sizes—silver, gold, and copper. The only other objects in the chamber were two human skeletons—one sitting with its back against the wall, and the other, slightly smaller, stretched upon the floor in an attitude of hopelessness.

"*Voilà!*" cried Peter the Devil, as Angèle Caron drew back trembling. "Behold my wife, who was the smaller one! The other, mademoiselle, was my best friend. The reason for their presence here you see in the little box—five thousand dollars, which I saved in part and in part had from my father!"

For a long moment there was silence, broken only by the fussy snapping of the torch. Then the girl turned upon Duchesne a look filled with horror.

"You did this——"

"No!" he shouted, unreasoningly angry that she should accuse him. "One day I

SIZES. THE ONLY OTHER OBJECTS IN THE CHAMBER WERE TWO HUMAN SKELETONS.

went to the mainland on business, believing that I had a faithful wife in my Mathilde, and a good friend in Henri Giroux. At that time I had two keys to this room; the duplicate which I had had made lies over there by Giroux. In those days we did not trust so much in banks, and as my father had done, I kept my money here. *Eh bien!* I came back from that trip to find my house empty. Frantic, I searched and called for hours—and heard only my own voice. Then, mademoiselle, something moved me to open this door. You understand what I saw—and you know now why I have been Peter the Devil, believing neither in the honour of woman nor the goodness of man!"

"But how—they could not have been dead when you found them?"

"Ah, yes! I was gone two days on that trip; and this room is air-tight. As to why they could not get out, once having gone in, you will learn when your own little fingers are clawing at the merciless walls!"

"*Dieu Seigneur!*" she cried, backing out. "What do you mean, Pierre?"

That she had called him "Pierre" was like a knife-thrust; yet he held fast to the purpose that had formed within him.

"Oh, I have heard of the bandits of the Petit Champlain in Quebec," he cried, "and I might have known that they would smell out the rumour of a treasure. You are the second woman who has betrayed me, and you shall share the fate of the first!"

Now terror swept all else from her face, and she fled toward the stairs, blindly. With a bound Duchesne was upon her, his great hands grasping her. But at the touch of her little palms, seeking desperately to push him away, all the strength of his evil purpose flowed out of him; his arms dropped to his sides, and into his heart came the feeling of the love that forgives all.

"I cannot!" he mumbled, in a voice broken with sobs. "I love you, and I cannot!"

Her lips parted to reply, but what words she spoke were drowned in a sudden uproar—blows and the breaking of wood, shouts and the vilest curses of the Quebec underworld. Duchesne swung about as the door splintered and went crashing to the floor. His plan had been to thrust Angèle into the stone chamber and then escape, knowing that not in one night could the robbers break into that room. But now that his revenge had failed, nothing mattered. All that he had suffered in the past half-hour turned to a seething rage which made him fling himself with head down into the tangle of men that broke through the doorway.

The fighting strength that had given him the name of Peter the Devil surged in his veins. The first of the robbers he clutched by neck and waist and heaved him headforemost against a stone wall; that was one who would never do another villainy. Arms dragged at his legs, and other arms sought to put a strangle-hold about his thick neck. A rain of fists blinded him, and he felt the impact of feet against his ribs. There could be but one end to this, and yet he fought on until he was borne down by the sheer weight of the others. They hung upon his arms, they kicked at his knees, and at length Peter lay flat upon the kitchen floor, pinioned by hands, and gazing upward into the foxlike face of the man who was evidently leader. Out of the corner of his eye he saw Angèle moving forward from a corner where she had taken shelter. The leader also saw her, and snapped a question over his shoulder.

"Did you get the key for us, or shall we have to torture this pig to get it?"

"It's as good as yours now, Tancrède," replied the girl, with a light laugh, "but you might have had it without the death of Octave, if you had been more patient."

There was a trace of mockery in her tone, and Tancrède of the fox face became visibly embarrassed.

"You can't blame us, mademoiselle," he apologized. "From our point of view it looked as though you were either soft on this big countryman or had lost your courage."

"*Imbécile!*" said Mlle. Caron, coldly. With deliberation she turned and pointed toward the door at the end of the kitchen. "There is the entrance to the treasure storeroom. The key is on a cord about his neck."

Pierre Duchesne closed his eyes in order that he might not see her. Any smallest doubt that might have lingered was gone. He hoped that they would kill him, as undoubtedly they would, before they left. Fingers reached into his breast and drew out the key; the cord parted at the touch of a knife.

"Shall we finish him now, or later?" asked a voice.

"Afterwards," answered the leader, a cautious man. "It is barely possible that we might need him for something. The money must be got first of all."

"There is a fortune in there," broke in Angèle, "but it is in a box as big as a coffin. It will take all of you to lift the thing."

What did she mean? Duchesne opened his eyes and saw the bandits—there were six of them besides the dead man—crowding about the door. He had been bound hand and foot while the leader talked with Angèle, but he was able to raise his head from the floor. The girl sat in one of his chairs with a pistol levelled at him and triumph in the glance which she swung from him to the members of the gang.

"Push!" she cried, suddenly. "It will take two of you to swing the door back."

Two men braced themselves, and slowly the door opened. The leader, with a candle in each hand, leaped in, with all but one of the pack at his heels. That one was the man with whom Angèle had talked at the kitchen door. Now she looked at him, smiling, while he hesitated.

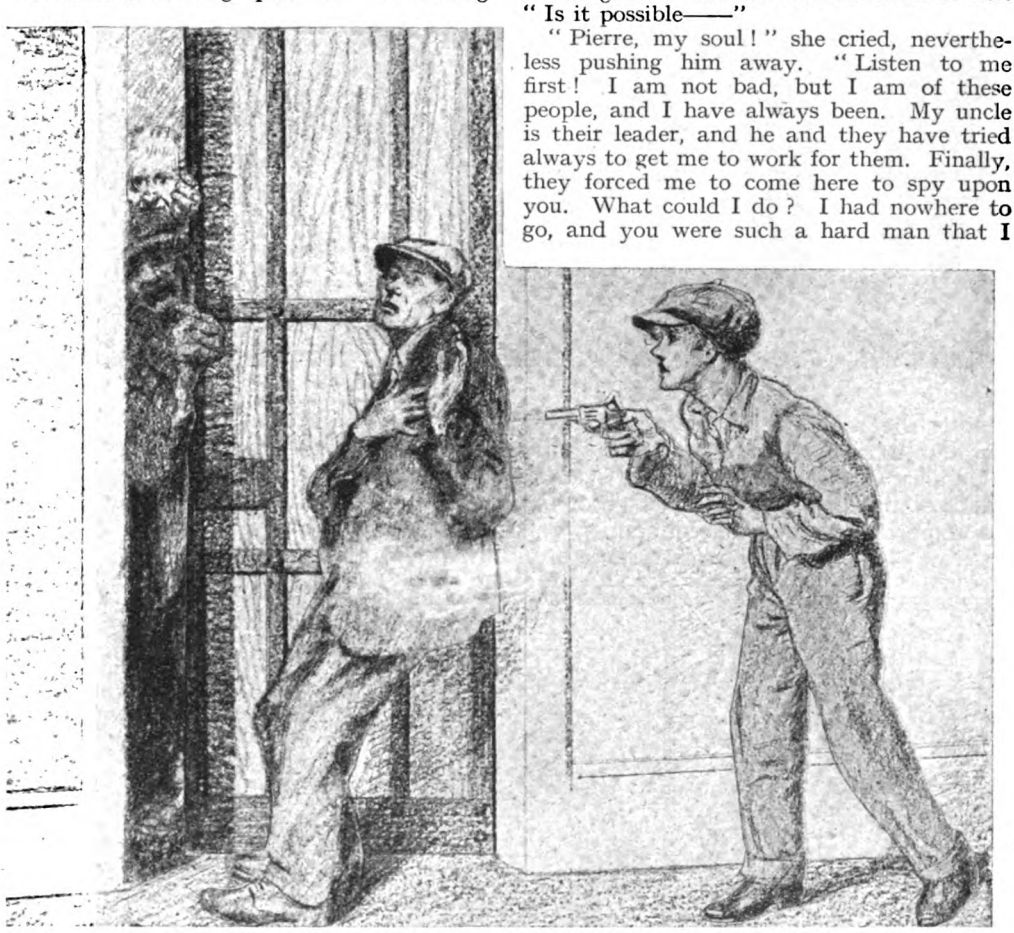
Duchesne, looking past the remaining robber, saw the door swing slowly back. In a moment it would close, for it had been hung by the cunning of the builders at a slight angle, so that its own weight invariably caused it to shut.

The door had still four or five inches to travel when from within the chamber came a cry. A pair of hands clutched the edge of the iron and oak barrier. Duchesne chuckled, knowing how little they would avail unaided. The door moved on, but the man outside, who had whirled at the shout, set his shoulder against it. In the same instant a report bit through the stillness of the kitchen. Smoke hazed across the vision of Pierre as he saw the man at the door slump down; then the opening closed.

With an inarticulate cry Angèle leaped across the room; with a kitchen knife she slashed away his bonds and helped him, bewildered, to stand.

"Angèle!" He held out his arms to her. "Is it possible——"

"Pierre, my soul!" she cried, nevertheless pushing him away. "Listen to me first! I am not bad, but I am of these people, and I have always been. My uncle is their leader, and he and they have tried always to get me to work for them. Finally, they forced me to come here to spy upon you. What could I do? I had nowhere to go, and you were such a hard man that I did not dare tell you the truth. But when you began to teach me the things I have always wanted to know, the things out of books, I loved you! Tell me, Pierre, that I have not done wrong."



"A REPORT BIT THROUGH THE STILLNESS. SMOKE HAZED ACROSS THE VISION OF PIERRE AS HE SAW THE MAN AT THE DOOR SLUMP DOWN."

Wrong? Five robbers were trapped in the prison chamber, and the only living one in the kitchen lay helpless and bleeding. Reverently and gently he whom they had called Peter the Devil took her into his arms.

"*Dieu merci!*" he exclaimed, softly, voicing the first prayer that had passed his lips in many years. "Thank God I have found happiness at last!"

Street Entertainers

by Fenn Sherie

Among the ranks of entertainers who cater for the amusement of the public, there are few more interesting or more shabbily picturesque than the open-air performers so familiar to theatre-goers and frequenters of the London side streets. Whilst details of the private lives of stage or film favourites make highly interesting reading, the experiences and reminiscences of these street entertainers provide a human document replete with humour and pathos.

HEEDLESS of the mud-splashes from the passing traffic, with the gutter for their stage and the patiently-waiting patrons of the pit for their audience, the street performers may be seen every evening in the byways of theatre-land. Among them are numbered conjurers, dancers, acrobats, nigger-minstrels, and other types of strolling players of varying talent. Relics of a past age are these, victims of the fickle public's changing tastes, living reminiscences of the palmy days of the circus, the nigger-minstrel troupe, and the old-fashioned music-halls. The very term by which they describe their profession—"busking"—can be traced to the "fit-up" companies that toured the land with melodrama many years ago, and nearly all of them can tell of the days when they were in the "profession," explaining that either on account of their particular line of business having fallen out of favour, or because of their natural disposition to wander, they perform outside the theatres instead of in.

"OYSTERS."
THE OLDEST NIGGER-MINSTREL ON THE LONDON STREETS.

So they pass from street to street, picking up a copper here, a silver coin there, earning just sufficient to see them comfortably through the day, and never giving a thought to the morrow. If the takings are good (and those who display exceptional talent can often earn anything up to two pounds for a day's work) they will rest on the following day, and uphold the traditions of their profession by breakfasting in bed.

Characters reminding us of childhood's days on the Margate sands are the old-fashioned burnt-cork nigger-minstrels, with banjos, bones, and hoarse voices, whose repertoires extend from "Annie Laurie" to "K-K-K-Katie." Sometimes they perform as a troupe, sometimes singly, but there is always a bond of brotherhood between them, and they take care never to queer one another's pitch, or to let

any of their songs "clash." Their costumes are bizarre in the extreme, one in particular, known as "Oysters" on account of the buttons on his coat, being adorned with coloured flags, badges, and medals, large property rings on his fingers, and a lemon or a carrot suspended under his chin. He is sixty-two years of age, and claims to be the oldest nigger-minstrel on the London streets.

"I've been at the entertaining game ever since I was a youngster," he will tell you, "and *inside* the theatres, too. I well remember playing the part of Dame Crusoe at the old Stratford Theatre thirty years ago, and I've had a good many seasons at Ramsgate with Uncle Ben's minstrels in the old days. And I've not finished with the profession yet—not by a long way—for when I'm not performing in the streets I'm doing a bit of small-part acting for the cinema. The film business has been a great help to some of us, but it's not like the old days. You ask my pal Kelly here—he's another old stager like myself."

Kelly smiles proudly and steps forward.

"Once upon a time I was on the 'halls.' Me and a pal used to work a double Irish cross-talk

"KELLY." A REMINISCENCE OF RAMSGATE.

act, and make good money at it, too, not to mention the times we've played clown and pantaloon at the old Marylebone Theatre. Ah, well, my partner's dead now, poor chap, and things aren't what they used to be. But I manage to earn enough to keep the little old home together, and that's all I want."

At this juncture Uncle Alf, the "funny man," chips in.

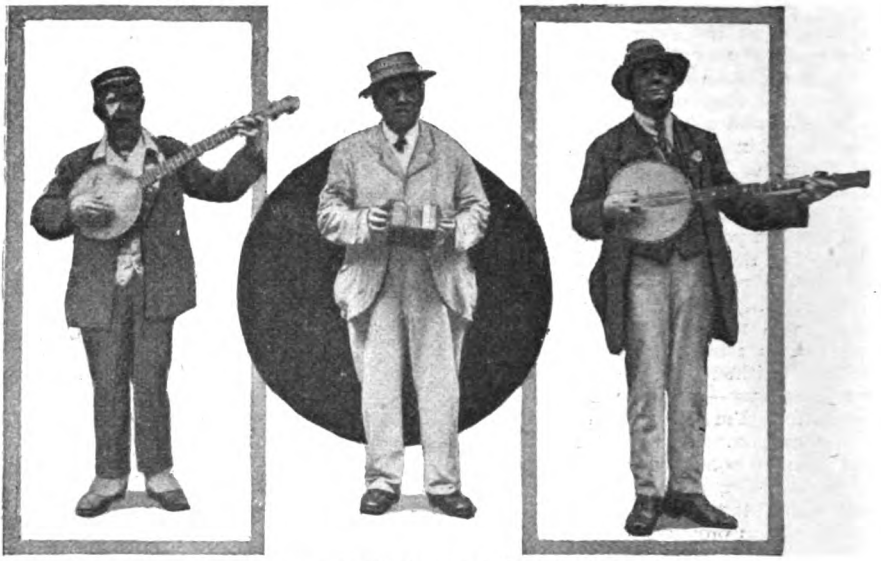
"My line of business is comedy," he says.

"UNCLE ALF," WHO IS WELL KNOWN TO THEATRE-GOERS.

"I play three things: the guitar, the tin whistle, and the fool. I can make the early doors laugh so much that they stay outside to watch me until there's standing room only. I've only one rival who can take their attention off me, and he's the camel in 'Chu Chin Chow'—when he arrives at the stage door, none of us gets a look in. I can collect a crowd as quick as lightning, and disperse 'em again quicker than any policeman—by handing the hat round."

Musical (and unmusical) performers are to be found in abundance, from the itinerant "Jazz Band" to its predecessor of bygone days, the "one-man band." The man depicted on the next page is an Italian subject who hails from Leeds, and had three sons serving in the British Army. Many of these instrumentalists have performed musical acts upon the variety stage, as for example, the dulcimer-player, who is well known as a lunch-hour performer in the City, as well as a theatre-queue entertainer.

"I've been musical from birth," he states, "and can give you any old tune you like to mention on almost any string instrument. I made this dulcimer myself, and originated the idea of playing it with my fingers instead of the usual 'sticks.' It's been a good pal to me for many years now. The most important thing with a show like mine is to suit the music to the public taste. If I'm performing outside a music-hall, then I give them 'Good-byee' or 'The Good Ship Yaka Hicky Doola,' and if I'm catering for a different class of queue—say, waiting for the opera—then I play the overture from the 'Poet and Peasant,' or something classical. It's a question of suiting the market."



A TYPICAL TRIO OF BURNT-CORK "BUSKERS."

Another performer, who echoes the same sentiment, is a ballad-singer often seen in the West-end. Accompanied by a harmonium and cornet (both instruments being played by one man)—he sings, in a rich tenor voice, such songs as "Deep in the Heart of a Rose," "Roses of Picardy," and "Indian Love Lyrics." He was, at one time, a cornet-player at a London theatre, but his lip failed him, and he had to resort to making a living with his voice. Since then he has always been a "busker," preferring the independence of the streets to the uncertainties of the stage. He asserts that talent is always appreciated by the Englishman, even though it be found in the roadway, and that when performing in the West-end he is often asked to step inside the house of some gentleman of means and give a private performance, for which he is usually well paid.

THE ONE-MAN BAND—AN ANTECEDENT OF "JAZZ."

Another musical performer has a sadder tale to tell. "I was once a leading comedian in a well-known music-hall sketch," he says, "until I joined up at the beginning of the war Now, after several years' service in the Navy, I can't get a 'shop' to suit me, so I've been driven to playing this instrument for a living—and me a member of a well-known family of variety artistes, and a near relative of one of the foremost animal impersonators of his day!" This fellow, with all his troubles, is not a pessimist, and is looking forward to obtaining a regular engagement shortly. He claims to have invented several novel musical instruments, with which he hopes some day to win his way to fame.

Two of the most picturesque performers on the London streets are a sturdy Scotsman and his wife, both in native dress. The man parades up and down playing the bagpipes until a crowd has collected, when the lady steps quietly forward into the road and

A DULCIMER-PLAYER WHO MAKES HIS OWN INSTRUMENTS.

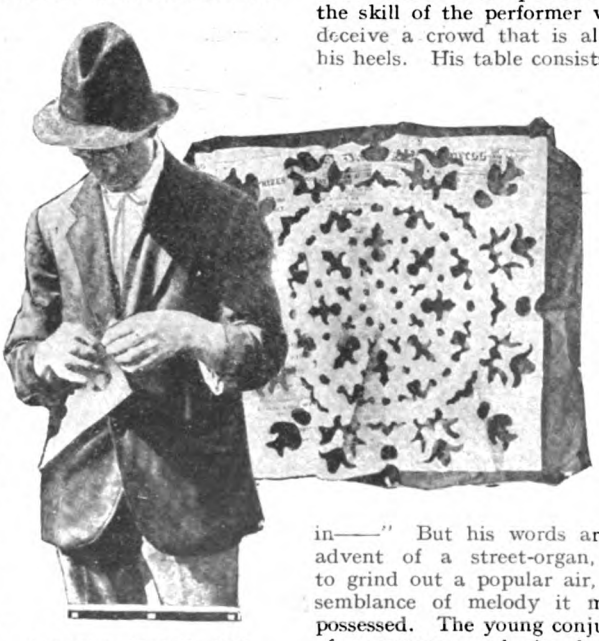
commences a sword-dance. Presently the coins begin to fall around them, and, seeing that the piper has his hands full, a kindly newsboy helps to pick up the money and slip it into "Jock's" tunic-pocket.

The performance over, he becomes communicative.

"We've been doing this for twenty-two years now—except for the year or two that I was in the Army—and I wouldn't go on the halls for a pension. I prefer to handle the bawbees after each performance, not to wait until the end of the week. The pipes are a fine instrument, and these I've got here could tell a tale if they could speak. See that little 'scar' where the wood is chipped away? That was received on active service in France."

Perhaps the most novel of "musical" acts is that of a man who plays a kind of tattoo on metal spoons to the accompaniment of a barrel-organ, much in the same way as the bones or clappers, but with considerably more gusto and effect.

Then there is the "paper-tearer," who, with the aid of a pair of scissors and a folded sheet of newspaper, dexterously makes a number of very clever designs. The rapidity with which he works calls forth many an ejaculation of astonishment, and his act is particularly popular among the children.



A PAPER-TEARER AND HIS WORK.

A SINGER OF POPULAR BALLADS.

The art of legerdemain is always a source of interest, and the public is quick to appreciate the skill of the performer who can successfully deceive a crowd that is almost treading upon his heels. His table consists of a broken music-stand, with the top bent to the horizontal and covered with the usual velvet cloth, upon which his "properties" are laid before he commences his performance. He dumps his hat in the road, rolls up his sleeves and, exhibiting the magic wand, addresses his audience.

"Ladies and Gentlemen," he shouts. "With your kind indulgence, I shall have much pleasure in——" But his words are cut short by the advent of a street-organ, which commences to grind out a popular air, divesting it of any semblance of melody it may originally have possessed. The young conjurer makes a gesture of annoyance and sits down upon the kerb, until the street organist has finished what is

"THE QUICKNESS OF THE HAND DECEIVES THE EYE." A YOUTHFUL CONJURER BAFFLES A LARGE AUDIENCE.

known as "bottling," *i.e.*, handing round the hat. Then, as the mechanical musician places himself between the shafts of his instrument, his rival jumps to his feet again.

"That's a breach of professional etiquette," he protests. "It's an understood thing in this business that a chap won't queer another bloke's pitch. But then he ain't a real professional—anyone can turn a handle!"

Having thus given full expression to his wrath, he commences his performance, first with a few card tricks, following these up with some more elaborate illusions, producing coloured handkerchiefs, ribbons, and flowers, and letting them fall in profusion around him. Each trick is accompanied by the usual humorous patter, and a small boy from the audience serves as a butt for his well-thought-out "impromptu" wit, until the complete good humour and attention of the crowd has been obtained, when he promptly passes round the hat.

Next comes a "lightning cartoonist," with a few chalks, a dilapidated easel, and some wall-paper, who proceeds to sketch portraits of "The One and Only Charlie," "The Kaiser in Civvies," and other subjects of popular appeal. This man was once a pavement artist, but finding that he possessed the knack of working fairly rapidly, conceived the idea of lightning sketches, thereby increasing his income considerably. *Apropos* of pavement artists, it is not generally known that some of these often run three or four "pitches"—passing from one to the other to make their sketches, and leaving an assistant, frequently a cripple, to collect the coppers.

A LIGHTNING SKETCH ARTIST.

A relic of the days of the circus is a young

HANDCUFF EXPERTS. A STRENUOUS MEANS OF EARNING A LIVING.

contortionist—a discharged sailor—dressed in coloured tights and singlet, with the Union Jack as a sash. He is double-jointed in every limb, and performs some very uncanny feats. Having been born in the realm of tinsel and sawdust, he appeared in the circus ring almost before he could talk, and for many years played the dual *rôle* of clown and a trapeze artiste, but as entertainments of that nature do not pay so well as of yore, he says that he finds "busking" more remunerative.

Another ex-bluejacket street-performer is a "handcuff expert" who, together with his wife, draws a large crowd outside the "Eagle Hut" in the Strand. He first invites any member of the audience to bind him or his wife with ropes, chains, and innumerable pairs of handcuffs. Then the collection is made, and the money handed to a small boy from the crowd, with a guarantee that the takings will be distributed amongst the children if either himself or his wife fail to free themselves from their bonds in a given time—usually about four minutes. Needless to say, they take good care never to fail, though they most certainly have to work hard for their living. It took him just under a minute and a half to free himself from the tightly-bound network of ropes, manacles, and chains, immediately after the above photograph was taken.

"I'm an all-round performer in the athletic business," he told the photographer, "and while I was in the Navy I gave shows in all parts of the world. High diving is one of my specialities; and if I were thrown into the water with all these ropes and chains on, I could get out of them almost as easily as I can on dry land. If any cinema-producer is looking for a fellow to perform a few stunts for him, such as diving from a high bridge or an aeroplane, I'm his man."

Though they are a motley crew, the majority of the street entertainers possess talent, and considering that they work amidst the humblest surroundings, unaided by programmes or "bill matter," and depending only upon themselves for success or failure, their living is well earned.

True, there are some who have risen from the streets to find popularity upon the stage, but how many are there, through misfortune rather than lack of ability, have fallen from the stage to the streets?

THE CONTORTIONIST. A RELIC OF THE CIRCUS.

Beauty and the Policeman

by Sydney Horler

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK NEWBOULD

I.

MANY a jewel is marred by an inartistic setting. Take the case of Police-Constable Alfred Higgs.

P.C. Higgs was raw-boned, loose-jointed, had a tendency to flat feet, and possessed the Higgs family moustache. Yet beneath this unpromising exterior there was an artistic soul: P.C. Alfred Higgs was devoted to photography (amateur).

This gift might have remained unknown to the world but for Hiram P. Pendexter, who had the slight assistance of Fate. Hiram had been left over from the American Invasion, and had obtained a position as reporter on the *Daily Miracle*. He had promised to write a miracle a day, and had nearly succeeded.

When Count Lucio Spozzani, the Italian bogus nobleman, was served with a writ on the steps of the Berkeley Square mansion to whose chatelaine he was paying his dishonourable attentions, Hiram was deputed to "get the story."

He arrived at the stately pleasaunce of Berkeley Square to find the flood of excitement had ebbed. The affair was being talked about behind closed doors. The crowd of idle sightseers had departed in search of fresh sensation. Nothing stirred—nothing, that is, except P.C. Alfred Higgs, who shifted his belt at regular intervals before resuming his beat. The sight put heart into Hiram.

"Say, officer, what do you know about this affair?"

P.C. Alfred Higgs had never been called "officer" before. He smiled. The word had such a pleasing, such a gratifying sound.

"You a reporter?" he asked.

"Yes—from the *Miracle*. I've just got to get the news, officer."

The repetition of this soothing word completely won the goodwill of P.C. Higgs. In short but succinct sentences he unfolded all the dramatic details incidental to the unmasking of the highly-camouflaged Count. Hiram inscribed these diligently in a notebook, hanging upon the words. He might have been recording the inspired utterances of one of the world's leading thinkers.

"That's about all," concluded P.C. Alfred Higgs; "and don't say you've got it from me, or I shall 'ear from the Inspector."

"Officer," replied the reporter, impressively, "you can safely leave that to me. Not one little word—you understand?—not one little word. If all the London police force had your intelligence there would be more fun being a reporter."

Decidedly a pleasant young man, thought P.C. Alfred Higgs. Such a comprehending nature invited confidence. He coughed nervously behind a huge gloved hand.

"Your paper ever publish photographs?" he inquired.

"Certainly," was the brisk reply. "The *Miracle* publishes anything. Why?"

"Oh, well—you see it's like this: I'm a bit of a photographer myself—it's a 'obby of mine in a way of speakin'—and I thought if I could get 'alf a guinea or so for one of my little studies, it wouldn't come amiss. On the quiet-like, that is; 'twouldn't do for the Inspector to know. A policeman"—bitterly—"ain't supposed to be an ordinary human bein' at all."

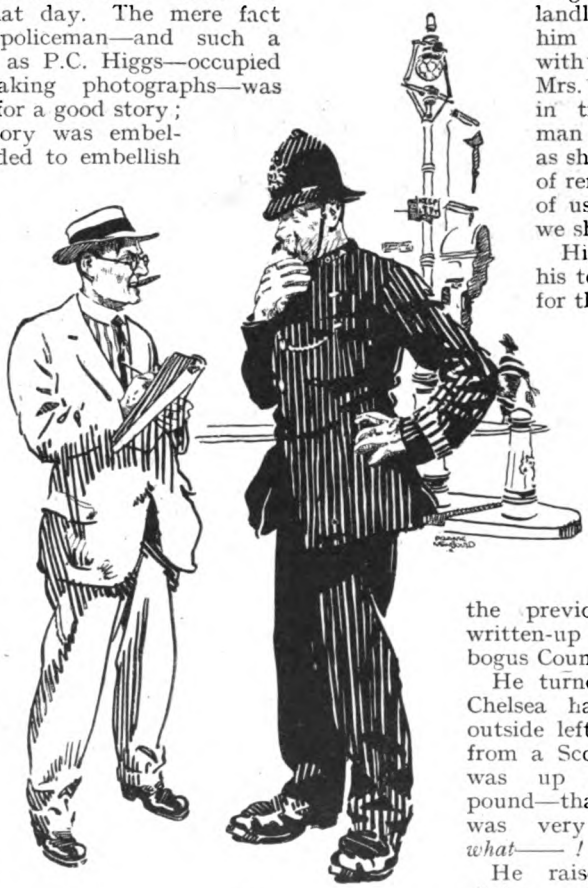
P.C. Higgs waited anxiously. A slight flush mantled his cheeks. His reference to money had been merely pretence; he was really trying to gain expression for the artistic side of his nature. He wanted to give it a wider field than his small Pimlico bedroom.

Pendexter's contract with his newspaper was to write one miracle daily. He took a long extended look at the policeman and slapped his leg in ecstasy. An idea dazzling in its brilliance had struck him. Here was his miracle for that day. The mere fact that a London policeman—and such a London policeman as P.C. Higgs—occupied his leisure in taking photographs—was sufficient material for a good story; but when that story was embellished as he intended to embellish it, the result would be hailed and acclaimed by the news-editor of the *Miracle*.

"Take photographs, do you, officer?" said Hiram. "What kind of photographs?"

"Bits of landscapes — still studies, I call 'em."

"Too darned still for the *Miracle* to publish," was the Arctic retort; "what you want to do is to get a small pocket-camera which you could hide beneath your cape, and take snapshots of pretty women. Think of it, officer! Here you are in the very heart of London society! When you've got a collection, we'll print them with a full-length portrait of yourself—no, not full-length," the reporter corrected himself hastily as his eye took in once more the Higgs *ensemble*. "We'll make the group a special feature on the picture page—'Beauties and ——' No, 'The Artistic Policeman and His Victims.' What about that? You *are* artistic, aren't you, officer?" he asked, smothering a laugh.



"THAT'S ABOUT ALL,' CONCLUDED P.C. ALFRED HIGGS; 'AND DON'T SAY YOU'VE GOT IT FROM ME, OR I SHALL 'EAR FROM THE INSPECTOR.'"

"I try to be," replied P.C. Higgs, diffidently. "Them still studies of mine——"

He spoke to a vanished audience. Having bestowed intellectual largesse, Hiram P. Pendexter had departed, his eyes gleaming behind his large tortoiseshell spectacles.

II.

THE next morning P.C. Alfred Higgs woke, like Byron, to find himself famous. Not being on duty until midday he had lain long in bed, and his landlady had brought him the *Daily Miracle* with an early cup of tea. Mrs. Haggerty believed in treating her policeman lodger attentively; as she was in the habit of remarking, "The best of us don't know when we shall want a friend."

Higgs yawned, drank his tea, and reached out for the paper. This was luxury, and his artistic nature enabled him to enjoy it to the utmost. He felt sybaritic. As he unfolded the paper, he wondered how the pleasant young fellow he had had the chat with on the previous afternoon had written-up the affair of the bogus Count.

He turned the pages idly. Chelsea had bought a new outside left for a record figure from a Scottish club; bacon was up another penny a pound—that was bad; he was very fond of bacon; *what—— !*

He raised himself into a sitting position, and clutched the paper tightly with both hands as if arresting it for some crime. In the course of his whole life he had never felt so agitated; and never, perhaps, had he looked so astonishingly comic. At the end of five minutes he collapsed in a limp condition on the pillow.

With what breath he had left, he cursed an unnamed person. The unnamed person was Hiram P. Pendexter.

The latter had not contented himself with writing-up the bogus Count; he had written up P.C. Higgs!

Stretching across a couple of columns were the black-type legends :—

POLICEMAN WITH ARTISTIC SOUL SNAPS BEAUTY AS SHE PASSES.

Higgs picked up the paper again, and, with blinking eyes, read :—

Love for the Beautiful in Life is sometimes found in the most unexpected quarters. A representative of the *Daily Miracle* yesterday discovered it hidden beneath the uniform of a London policeman.

Few would think to look at this constable's grim and rugged features that he cared for anything except the merciless, if just, execution of his duty. This man, one would say, was concerned only with the material, the grosser, and cruder sides of Life. P.C. Higgs—for that is his name—would be the last to claim notice for himself; but, as he put it to the *Miracle* representative yesterday, "What does the husk matter, if the soul be true: if the apartments of the Mind are furnished?"

For if P.C. Higgs has not beauty of the body, he has beauty of the mind; if his exterior is prosaic, his interior is lifted clean out of the commonplace by the intense love he has for all artistic things.

Poet, philosopher, artist, this amazing London policeman is one of the most remarkable individuals in the Metropolis. In the course of the most interesting conversation which our representative had with him yesterday, he stated that he never allowed an opportunity to slip of adding to the artistic treasures of his humble home. Photography just now is his chief passion, and he has collected a number of prints which are unique in human interest. In Berkeley Square, where he is on daily duty, there passes before him a bewildering procession of the world's most beautiful women.

With the aid of a small camera, which he hides beneath his cape, this artistic policeman snaps each pretty face as its owner passes. Each day he adds to his collection, until now, as he proudly confessed yesterday, he has the finest amateur collection of photographic beauty in London.

The writer asked the artistic policeman whom he considered was the most beautiful woman in London, but he would not be drawn.

There was much in the article which P.C. Higgs did not understand, but he was able to grasp the main principles. His imagination baulked at what the Divisional Inspector would say when *he* grasped the said principles. Ruin and degradation stared him in the face. He upbraided himself bitterly for speaking to a newspaper reporter at all; he wished that he had never taken up photography. Catching sight of one of his still studies on the wall, he flung a slipper at it, swearing profusely.

P.C. Alfred Higgs was the biggest attraction in London that day. He drew by far the biggest crowds. Mayfair stayed away from the *matinées* to look at London's Artistic Policeman. The narrow street leading into the Square from Piccadilly was blocked with traffic.

The Divisional Inspector, passing down Piccadilly, was puzzled. His notebook contained no record of a big social event which would account for this flood of traffic. Pulling at his grizzled moustache, he watched a crowd of pedestrians trying to worm their way through the ruck of carriages.

Oppressed by the fear that something was wrong, the Inspector shouldered his way through the dense throng. It took him some time to reach Berkeley Square, and when he did get there he was red in the face and badly-blown.

In the Square itself, a number of carriages were drawn up. Some of these were empty. The drivers' haughty features were humanized by a slight smile in which could be read contempt.

The Inspector noted all this, and became even more puzzled. So far as he was able to see, some sort of reception was being held in the centre of the Square. Unusual. He craned forward.

The next minute, stifling an exclamation that would have disgraced his uniform if heard in public, he was elbowing his way through the crowd to the centre of the Square. As he said, subsequently, it was more than he could stand. Crowded round an ordinary, workaday policeman, and *his* policeman, too, were a number of fashionably-dressed women in whom he recognized many of the best-known leaders of society in London. The women all seemed to be asking the policemen questions and to be waiting anxiously for his replies.

It was the most remarkable moment in the Inspector's life. He was deprived of any form of speech.

While he still gaped he felt his arm seized. A tall, mystical-looking woman, dressed in a flowing robe that wanted brushing, stood before him.

"Inspector—I'm Lady Mystoria Pondersby, and I want you to do me ever such a wee kindness. Would you mind my taking that wonderful policeman home to tea, away from all these vulgar women?"

The Inspector put his hand to his swimming head.

"Which wonderful policeman, your ladyship?" he asked, groping with his feet for the solid earth.

"That one," and Lady Mystoria pointed a long, slim finger at a tall, haggard-looking figure in constable's clothes who was holding the reception. "There he is, the man with the 'furnished mind!' Don't disappoint me, Inspector, I plead with you! Give me

permission to take him away from these notoriety-seekers. I want him to advise me about my new book—the 'Window of the Mind.'"

The Inspector raised both hands to his head under the pretence of putting his cap straight.

"There must be some mistake, your ladyship," he said, huskily. "There isn't anything wonderful about that policeman except his feet, which are the biggest in the Force. As for his havin' a 'furnished mind,' he lives in a bed-sitting-room down somewhere in Pimlico. His name is 'Iggs."

"A sensitive soul satisfied with solitude and its dreams!" murmured Lady Mystoria, ecstatically. "You do not understand me, Inspector, but 'Iggs—I presume you mean Higgs; no man could possibly be called Iggs—will! Cannot you get someone to relieve him from his duties?"

Every precedent in thirty years' service in the Force fought against it, but, all facts considered, it was the best thing that could possibly happen, for the essential business was to get the deputation-receiving Higgs removed.

"*'Iggs!*"

With limbs that faltered, P.C. Alfred Higgs crossed to where the Inspector was standing.

"You will accompany Lady Pondersby home, 'Iggs—and you will report to me—to me, personally, you understand—at the Station immediately afterwards." There was a cold edge to the last few words which drove all the artistry out of the artistic policeman's soul, and left nothing but fear behind.

"Please sit beside me," said Lady Mystoria Pondersby, throbbingly.

P.C. Alfred Higgs lowered himself by

"CROWDED ROUND AN ORDINARY, WORKADAY POLICEMAN WERE A NUMBER OF FASHIONABLY-DRESSED WOMEN, WHO ALL SEEMED TO BE ASKING QUESTIONS."

trepidative degrees to the fragile Chesterfield. His face bore a look of acute apprehension; something of the expression an early Christian martyr of a sensitive disposition must have borne in the act of being thrown to the lions.

This—this being alone with a woman who looked at him broodingly—was the most terrifying experience of all. If the Inspector had not ordered him to do so, he would never have entered the carriage. Now, as he looked despairingly around, he had but one thought—*flight!*

He wanted to get away—far away—lost from everything; away from the host of ridiculous women who asked him such fool-questions; away from the crowd who had made jokes about his feet; away from the baleful glare of the Inspector; away from the accusing eyes of Mary Gill——

Which brings us to Mary Gill. Mary has been crowded out of the canvas so far by the stirring march of events.

P.C. Alfred Higgs had only been doing duty at Berkeley Square for just over a month, but it had been time enough for romance to blossom side by side in his heart with photography. One Wednesday evening—he frequently told himself he would

never be able to forget what night it was—a hand had sought his arm protectingly.

"A man—oh! a man keeps on following me! Look! he is waiting over there!"

He had looked at the upturned face of the girl. Perhaps it was because no girl had ever cast him for the *rôle* of protector before; perhaps it was because the eyes of the girl were like misty stars (or so it seemed to the artistic soul of P.C. Alfred Higgs); perhaps——

But who can say? Let it suffice that the heart of P.C. Alfred Higgs surrendered that moment to a feminine creature who did not come up to his shoulder, a girl whose figure looked particularly trim in a neat dark costume, and whose hair was coiled smartly beneath a coquettish little hat, the feather of which tickled his face as he leaned downwards.

"Molestin' you, is he, miss?" P.C. Higgs had boomed. He was filled with a just and terrible wrath. He longed for the opportunity to show off his physical prowess before this dazzlingly pretty girl who had elected him her champion.

But the man had fled before he could reach the spot, and so he had to content himself with detailing all the things he would have done to the creature if he had caught him.

"You'll generally find me 'ere about this time of night, an' if ever you wants a 'elpin' 'and——" Emotion had prevented P.C. Higgs from completing the sentence; with the girl looking so steadily at him, he felt himself acutely conscious of his physical idiosyncrasies. What a fool he was to let himself be led away by a pretty face—he, Higgs, a common copper, with the biggest feet in the Force!

"Thank you, Mister Policeman," the girl had brightly replied. As she went away, she glanced back over her shoulder—a look of such roguish joy that P.C. Alfred Higgs had had to turn away in case the temptation to leave his beat should become too strong for him.

It seemed that Mary Gill often felt the need of a helping hand. She needed it so often that she had given P.C. Higgs a photograph, which the latter carried in the waistcoat-pocket nearest his heart. Such, indeed, had been the rate of progress between the two that now one night a week was devoted to that interesting social custom known as "walking out."

Seated on the fragile Chesterfield, P.C. Higgs felt his spirits sinking lower and lower. When he had been surrounded in Berkeley Square, he had seen Mary Gill amongst the crowd. Her eyes, usually so mockingly tender, had blazed with contempt, and, when he had looked at her, she had turned away.

From the horrible past to the dreadful present, P.C. Higgs was switched by the low droning of Lady Mystoria's voice. He had never seen anyone quite like Lady Mystoria before, and he hoped that he never would again. There was a look in Lady Mystoria's eye which he didn't like. When his hostess spoke, he found himself shivering.

"Let me tell you who I am," said Lady Mystoria, extending her hands and speaking in a low-pitched voice that reverberated through the room. "I am the Life President of the Leavened Souls, an association of the truer and greater minds. We try to trace and uphold the Inner Significance of Life. Then, too, I am just completing a book on the human soul's call for Beauty, which I am entitling 'The Window of the Mind.' You will readily see with what earnest joy

"AFTER STANDING LIKE A STATUE FOR SEVERAL SECONDS, MARY GILL SCREAMED HYSTERICALLY AND THE TEA-TRAY DROPPED FROM HER HANDS."

I sought you out after reading those wonderfully stimulating things about you in to-day's *Daily Miracle*. Tell me—the paper didn't give it—what is your full name ? "

" 'Iggs," weakly replied the distraught constable.

" Christian name ? " Lady Mystoria flashed him an encouraging smile, and reached out to press a bell.

" Halfred." He was afloat in a rudderless boat on a boundless sea. But he dimly remembered there was an " h " in his name somewhere.

" Ah ! I see, Higgs. But what does a name matter, Higgs ? My name is Pondersby, and yet—yet I think I am as much a lover of the beautiful as you are yourself. It is true that I have changed my Christian name from Louisa to Mystoria—Louisa is so commonplace, and Mystoria is so—so symbolic, don't you think ? "

P.C. Alfred Higgs was beyond thought. He had given up thinking ten minutes before. All he could do now was to perspire. This he did freely.

While he was still staring blankly in front of him, Lady Mystoria spoke again.

" You mustn't mind my asking, my dear Mr. Higgs, but is *my* photograph included in your collection ? "

Lady Mystoria's hand was upon his arm ; Lady Mystoria herself was bending forward expectantly, when—the door opened, and a maid-servant entered the room, bearing a tea-tray.

Higgs, grateful for relief, turned his head, and—for the second time that day—looked into the hostile face of the girl he loved ! He remembered now that Mary Gill had never informed him where she was in service ; whenever he had asked her she had evaded the point. After meeting Lady Mystoria Pondersby, he could quite understand why Mary wished her place of employment to remain a secret, but he felt convinced that this dramatic confrontation was going to complicate matters still further.

It did. After standing like a statue for several seconds, Mary Gill screamed hysterically, and in that moment the tea-tray dropped from her hands and crashed noisily on the floor.

A short while afterwards the strange spectacle of a hurrying policeman (minus his helmet) might have been seen in Berkeley Square. In the confusion caused by the collapsing tea-tray, P.C. Alfred Higgs had bolted precipitately.

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III.

" I AM only writing " (the letter said), " to tell you how I hate you. I will never see you again, and if you dare to write to me, I won't open the letter, but shall return it.

" You have broken my heart, Alfred Higgs. I didn't think it of you. I always thought you were different from other men, or I shouldn't have walked out with you—and me as careful as I am. To think of you with all

those women's photographs—oh, how I hate you—hate you—hate you! And let me tell you this, my face is as good as any of theirs; perhaps better. Anyway, I want it back; I should blush to have it stuck up alongside those—those others you have.

"Good-bye, and if you see me, don't you ever dare to speak to me again. If you call on that new sweetheart of yours, Lady Pondersby (ha! ha!), you won't find me there. I left to-day.

"MARY GILL."

When the knock came on the door, Higgs was sitting on his bed. He stared blankly at his landlady as she entered.

"There's a young feller downstairs who says 'e must see you," said Mrs. Haggerty.

"Didn't trouble to wait; came right up directly I heard you were at home. How do you find yourself, officer?" Hiram P. Pendexter, the human breeze, stood in the doorway.

The words brought the policeman back to life. He rose from the bed, frowning.

"Clear out!" he growled, "both of you!"

Making uneasy, fluttering noises, Mrs. Haggerty departed. But Pendexter remained framed in the doorway.

"There's a proposal I want to make to you, officer," he said, "and even if you throw me out of the window afterwards, I've got to put it to you. That's why I have been sent here. It's my job."

Sensing trouble, and perhaps actual violence, his tone had become serious. Before the policeman could reply, he had entered the room, closing the door behind him.

"It was your job to make me a laughin'-stock, I s'pose?" said the policeman, harshly. "I nearly got chucked out of the Force to-day through you, and there's something worse than that—darn you!"

The reporter did not flinch before the threatening fist. Instead, he drew out a cigar-case and held it open.

"Have a smoke, and we'll talk things over," he said, adding: "I know I owe you every sort of apology. But I promise you that you sha'n't suffer. We want a Chief Commissionaire at the office, and if you care for the job you've only to say so. In any case, I've come along to offer you fifty pounds."

"Fifty pounds!" exclaimed the policeman. "You mustn't try any bribin' with me, young feller. I've enough trouble as it is."

"I'm not trying to bribe you, officer. This is money for nothing—and everything perfectly straight and above-board, too. It's only another artistic policeman job." As the reporter noted the warning lights in the constable's eyes, he hastened to explain: "All we want you to do is to act as judge in a Beauty Competition."

"You keep your fifty quid; I wouldn't be badgered by those women again for any money." P.C. Higgs spoke decisively.

"You need never meet a single woman," countered the reporter. "Listen! this is the idea: All London knows you now as the Artistic Policeman. You are supposed to be a judge of real beauty. The *Miracle* intends running a Beauty Competition embracing all classes of society. Any woman can enter, but when the photographs are published no names will be printed underneath. The public won't know whether they are looking at a duchess or a charwoman. We are offering five hundred pounds in prizes—two hundred pounds for the woman you judge to be the prettiest of the whole bunch, one hundred pounds for the second prize, and so on. I've just been round to see that Inspector man, and I've talked him round. You won't get into any fresh trouble with him—and there's fifty pounds coming to you: don't forget that. . . . My! but that's a pretty girl"—picking up a photograph. "Now let's see if we can't fix this thing up."

The *Daily Miracle* was a newspaper that lived by "stunts." It had built up its huge circulation on them; they were the breath of life to it. The Nameless Beauty Competition, in which the sole judge and adjudicator was an ordinary London policeman, proved to be its greatest triumph.

The competition was an enormous success from the start; each day for a fortnight a whole page of the newspaper was devoted to the photographs of the nameless Beauties. That some of the faces looked really distressing was due no doubt more to bad reproduction than to an error of judgment on the part of the senders of the photographs.

During the week-end which followed the close of the competition, London throbbed with anxiety. To be described as the most beautiful woman in the Metropolis! And to be given two hundred pounds as well!

Over a million copies of the *Daily Miracle* were printed on the Monday morning, and they were all sold by breakfast-time. Soon afterwards a name was on a million lips. Men going to business said it; women about to undertake the usual weekly washing stopped to utter the name. Its owner became a national figure, and one of the most envied women in the world.

The name, in staring black type, stood out at the head of a column on the principal news-page. This article was easily the most arresting of any in the paper—first because of the prominence with which it was displayed, and secondly because it had been written by Hiram P. Pendexter. It read:—

The Nameless Beauty Competition organized by this journal is over. Its object has been accomplished. The *Daily Miracle* set out to discover the most flawless type of feminine beauty in London, and has done so.

Few will cavil at the choice the adjudicator, P.C. Alfred Higgs, better known as London's Artistic Policeman, has made. In awarding the first prize, P.C. Higgs has shown that he is a real judge of beauty. In the exquisite face which he has singled out for chief honour will be found all the attributes which make the Englishwoman the most admired of all nations.

"THE REPORTER DID NOT FLINCH BEFORE THE THREATENING FIST. INSTEAD, HE DREW OUT A CIGAR-CASE AND HELD IT OPEN. 'HAVE A SMOKE, AND WE'LL TALK THINGS OVER,' HE SAID."

Prefacing these felicitous remarks were the headlines :—

MARY GILL

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN IN LONDON.

* * * *

He had written for a meeting, and she had sent the proper reply.

It was the magic hour of dusk. The noises of the great city were hushed. In the kindly half-light, Hyde Park looked a questing-ground of romance. From the distance there came the pulsing throb of a military band. P.C. Alfred Higgs, dressed in plain clothes, put his hand on the arm of Mary Gill and guided her through the gate.

The night air was balmy; it seemed fragrant with spices. As they walked, the music of the distant band wafting them to some fairy shore, they saw, in the friendly shadows, two chairs close together as though an invisible fate had placed them so.

"We'll sit down and listen to the music." The words were commonplace enough, but Higgs's voice sounded strained.

A quiver went through the girl's slight frame as the policeman's arm groped round the back of her chair. "Are you goin' to forgive me, Mary?" said P.C. Alfred Higgs.

"You ought not to have sent my photograph to the paper without my knowing it, Alfred, but—do you really think I am the most beautiful girl in London?" The low voice was faint with happiness.

"If I hadn't ever seen you before, Mary, I should have chosen you! Come closer!" He held out great enveloping arms.

The most beautiful woman in London and London's most commonplace policeman slipped out of the hateful past into the rainbowed future.

The ticket collector didn't have the heart to ask them if they had paid their pennies.

The FUNERALS of MONSIEUR DUDINOT

by Ralph H. Barbour

THIS was told to me by a certain M. Desault as we sat one evening over our coffee at the Pension Valmy. He related the incidents as having come under his personal observation, and, although he was but a chance acquaintance, I have no reason to doubt M. Desault's ingenuousness. And yet it may have been that his tongue was in his cheek and that in retelling the story I am laying myself open to ridicule. If so—— But no, I prefer to believe that it all happened just as M. Desault told it.

"There is at present nothing to alarm, Monsieur Dudinot," said the doctor. "A tendency, yes. You have spent too much of your life leaning over ledgers in stuffy offices and have taken no exercise. The result, as we perceive. You sleep badly, you have little appetite, you arise already fatigued, your brain is sluggish." He tapped M. Dudinot lightly, almost gaily, on the chest. "The trouble is there. You have starved your lungs until they make protest. So far there is no disease, but continue——" He shrugged expressively.

"And your advice, Monsieur Doctor?"

"Fresh air, much fresh air. But not the air of Paris, monsieur. Go into the country and live out of doors. Walk, ride, drive. Lie under the trees. The important thing is to breathe, to fill those neglected lungs with clean, pure air, to expand them thoroughly—so! Two months, three, and you will sleep like a little child and eat like a butcher."

"Unfortunately, monsieur, what you suggest is impossible. I am a poor man. My business requires my presence in Paris. It is but lately that I began for myself. Perhaps next year——"

The doctor shrugged again and smiled with a hint of derision. "That, monsieur, is for you to decide, but I fear that next year will be too late."

"Oh!" said M. Dudinot, blankly. "And there is no alternative? If one compromised, monsieur? Say a week in the country? Perhaps two—though not together?"

"Monsieur, I have prescribed. If you do not choose to take my medicine, what can I do? But try your week or two weeks. At least you will benefit by just so much. Or wait, Monsieur Dudinot! You say that you cannot leave the city because of your business. But you have, doubtless, certain hours of leisure? Why not, then, devote them to restoring your health? For a little one may engage a carriage and be driven into the country. If one did so each day one could not fail to benefit."

"Doubtless," agreed the patient, dubiously. "Or perhaps to walk into the country each day——"

"No, for you would tire long before reaching it, and becoming tired is no part of the treatment. Having reached the country, alight and stroll about. But do not overdo it. Rest much. Then re-enter your carriage and be driven home. And, attend, monsieur; the carriage must be open, not sealed like a tin of little fishes. For the rest, plain, nourishing food, all the sleep you can get, and no worry. Above all, Monsieur Dudinot, no worry!"

Outside, snuggling down into his coat-collar, since, while the month was May, a chill breeze was blowing, M. Dudinot smiled ruefully. "He talks of carriages as though one rode without paying," he murmured. "It is evident that health is but one more thing that may be commanded only by the rich. Or it may be that a less prosperous physician would have discovered a remedy better suited to my purse."

You are to picture this M. Pierre Dudinot as slight, somewhat stooping from much bending over books, of medium stature when erect, thin-visaged and not uncomely, affecting black in his modest attire, grave and shy; in short, a man at whom you would not have looked a second time; and who would not wish it. He had come to Paris as a very young man twenty years before from a little village in the Department of Ardeche and had secured employment as a bookkeeper. Unambitious, but steady and industrious, he had prospered modestly, for even without ambition one must get on if one labours and learns; the more so when, as in M. Dudinot's case, one has a passion for figures. He had no near relatives and had never married. He lived alone, therefore, in two small rooms at the top

of an ancient building in the Rue de Ponbois. The locality was none of the finest, but neither is the salary of a bookkeeper enormous. At least one looked down from the windows upon the river. He had simple tastes and few wants, and he lived very contentedly amongst the sparrows until this sickness that was less a sickness than a premonition came to him. Arriving when it did, it was doubly unfortunate, for, having recently set himself up as an expert accountant, he needed all his health in the difficult task of securing a clientage. Thus far being his own employer had proved less remunerative than working for others.

Although he could not follow to the letter the advice of the doctor, M. Dudinot had no idea of allowing the fee he had paid to be utterly wasted. If fresh air were what he needed, fresh air he would procure to the best of his ability. And since carriages were not within his means, he would walk. As business was none too brisk he had time in plenty, and so each day he set forth on his search for health, sometimes taking a conveyance to the edge of the city and wandering about the borderland between town and country, sometimes seeking the open spots of the city. He did not walk long at a time for the reason that he soon became tired. When that happened he sought a place where he might be seated until energy returned. It was while so resting on a pleasant May morning that he glanced up and saw Opportunity beckon.

Farther along the street was a small church, and before it many carriages were drawn up in the shade of the trees. His first thought, of a wedding, was discarded when his eyes fell on the sombre magnificence of a hearse. Even as he accepted its significance, the funeral party began to emerge. M. Dudinot had scant knowledge of the pomp and ceremony of funerals, and presently interest and curiosity had drawn him across the street, where he mingled with the cheerfully-stricken mourners and watched the masterly performance of the impressive undertaker and his assistant. There were many persons to be assigned to carriages, but there were also many carriages, and after the family and nearer relatives of the deceased had been seated with proper precedence, those who remained were permitted to take places as it pleased them. There was even some crowding of a decorous sort, and M. Dudinot, quite without volition of his own, suddenly found himself confronted by the yawning door of a carriage, while, from behind, came courteous but firm pressure. For an embarrassed, dismayed instant he hesitated. Then Fate in the shape of an insistent elbow decided him. M. Dudinot entered the carriage.

At first he took himself to task and wished himself back on the pavement, but then, as the vehicle filled and drove away, a pleasurable sense of adventure thrilled him and assurance returned as he discerned that the other occupants knew each other no more than they knew him, or he them. No longer fearing detection as an impostor he began to enjoy the drive and

"UNFORTUNATELY, MONSIEUR, WHAT YOU SUGGEST IS IMPOSSIBLE. I AM A POOR MAN."

to take delight in the scenes that flowed past. It was all very pleasant. The cortège rolled through the city and out into the sun-bathed country. There was a soothing, restful cadence in the creak of the springs and the tot-tot of the horses' hoofs. Eventually his companions talked and he learned something of the gentleman whose funeral he was attending. He was pleased to discover that the deceased had been a man of many virtues, for it is naturally a satisfaction to know that one bestows honour where it is deserved.

The service at the cemetery was beautiful and impressive. M. Dudinot had now forgotten that he was an interloper and was experiencing a feeling of gratitude towards the departed gentleman who, though unwittingly, had provided him with so delightful an excursion. He felt that the world had suffered a distinct loss in the death of so agreeable and kindly a citizen, and was sensible of a slight and not unpleasant melancholy. One viewing M. Dudinot as he stood humbly there in the background would have been at once convinced of the sincerity of his grief.

The air was refreshing, the sun was warm, and the little new leaves whispered consolingly in the breeze. As the service ended a thrush in a near-by tree burst into triumphant song.

The return was equally enjoyable. In short, the adventure had proved a great success, and M. Dudinot congratulated himself. That night he slept better than for many weeks.

That was the beginning. To one acquainted with the city it was no task at all to find a funeral nearly every day. To be sure, he sometimes drew blank, and there were occasions when the smallness of the gathering made it unwise to add his presence. But there were few days that spring and summer when M. Dudinot did not have his drive into the country. He became familiar with many cemeteries: Ivry, St. Roch, St. Ouen, and a dozen more. He bought a mourning band for his hat which it became his custom to don out of respect for the departed, and he attained before long to an expression of restrained grief that was a triumph of artistry. He was, in fact, a distinct addition to any funeral. And you may be certain that so much fresh air, attained with slight expense of exertion, benefited him marvellously. His sleeping improved, his appetite returned, and he arose each morning prepared for anything the day might hold. As a result, his business progressed, and by the time the leaves were changing in the Bois it was becoming increasingly difficult for him to find time for his drives. Frequently several days would pass without one, but, although he felt no ill-effect from the deprivation, he realized that it would be unwise to neglect his health too long at a time, and so it was that on a morning when the leaves were rustling underfoot and the autumn sky was softly, hazily blue, he tore himself resolutely from his labours and set forth on his customary quest.

At first it seemed that he was doomed to failure. Four of his most reliable churches offered him nothing. Even a fifth held forth scarcely more promise, since, while there were carriages outside, their number was so small that he visioned himself returning unrefreshed to the Rue de Pontoise. But he was ready for a few minutes' rest, and so entered the church and took a seat just within the door. To his surprise, few as the carriages were, they yet outnumbered the mourners three to one; and when I tell you that there were three carriages outside you will see that the mourners were indeed few! But there was no lack of pomp or ceremony, and M. Dudinot, who, as you may well understand, had by now become a connoisseur in funerals, rendered the utmost approval. He had not meant to remain longer than to rest himself, but the beauty of the service, the sonorous voice of the organ, the celestial chanting of the choir, held him enthralled to the end. Then, being punctilious in such matters, he remained seated until the casket, more than ordinarily imposing, had been borne past.

When he reached the pavement the undertaker waited beside the door of a carriage, a black-gloved hand holding the door invitingly open.

"Monsieur!" he murmured.

There was more than invitation in his voice, however; there was command. He possessed a stern countenance and a compelling eye. And M. Dudinot, as I have sought to impress on you, was of a diffidence. You guess what happened. M. Dudinot hesitated, even drew back, but there his courage failed him. True, he might have explained, but in all his funeral experiences he had never yet been required to explain; he had either accepted hospitality or, from motives of discretion, withdrawn. There had been no words.

The undertaker coughed behind correct fingers.

If, reflected M. Dudinot as he made of himself a very small object in the corner of the seat, they allowed him the entire possession of the carriage—— But it was not to be. The door was darkened.

"Monsieur!"

M. Dudinot returned the bow and murmured faintly in response. The door closed inexorably. The cortège moved. Presently M. Dudinot stole a look at his companion. He was a man of perhaps fifty years, prosperous looking, inclined to corpulence, evidently a successful man of affairs in the city. His dress was immaculate, his bearing irreproachable. Grey moustaches were trimmed upward in the prevailing mode, gold-rimmed glasses trailed a black silk ribbon. Doubtless, decided M. Dudinot, with sinking heart, a brother of the deceased. He wondered how long it would be before he was called to account. He meditated hurling himself from the carriage. They were in the Rue de la Roquette. Was it possible that Père Lachaise was their destination? He had never yet attended a burial in Père Lachaise, and he wavered. And just then his companion spoke, and to M. Dudinot's relief the remark was merely in commendation of the weather.

Conversation ensued and touched on many subjects, but neither the person whose remains they were following to the grave nor M. Dudinot

was among those subjects. Before long the latter was able to speak without stammering, and as his uneasiness passed he began to enjoy the talk. His companion had intelligence, a pleasing voice, and charming manners. The ride seemed very short to M. Dudinot.

The service was simple, impressive, and brief, and soon they were rolling back to the city. It was not until they were almost there that the bombshell exploded. In a lull in the conversation M. Dudinot's companion observed politely :—

" Pardon, monsieur, but may I ask if you had known our friend long ? "

" N-no, monsieur," stammered M. Dudinot.

" Ah, that is doubtless why we have never met before. You are, perhaps, distantly related to M. Rotrou ? "

" N-no, monsieur."

" No ? Well, as for that, he has frequently assured me that he possessed no relatives to his knowledge. You will pardon my curiosity, I trust, since in my position of legal adviser I have long enjoyed the honour of M. Rotrou's confidence, and tell me how well you were acquainted with him."

There was a moment of deep silence. Then : " I—I never saw M. Rotrou in my life," was the astounding reply.

" But, monsieur ! "

And then M. Dudinot made a clean breast of it, and his companion's bewilderment changed to amusement, and more than once he chuckled. M. Dudinot ended his rueful tale with embarrassed apologies which the other waved aside. He was now observing M. Dudinot with thoughtful gravity. " Remarkable ! " he murmured.

" Reprehensible, I fear," said M. Dudinot, sadly.

" I was thinking of something else, monsieur." The man of law frowned slightly. " It is a complication, and yet—— " He paused and glanced from the carriage. " I leave you at the next street, monsieur. Will you do me the honour of calling at my office to-morrow between ten and eleven in the morning ? "

He extracted a card from a case and presented it. " M. Adolphe Le Fere, Avocat," read M. Dudinot, " 18bis, Boulevard Haussmann."

" But, monsieur," he faltered, " surely my offence—— "

" Set your mind at rest, pray. It is on another matter that I beg your attendance. I may count on you ? "

" Yes, monsieur."

" PRESENTLY M. DUDINOT STOLE A LOOK AT HIS COMPANION. HE WAS PROSPEROUS LOOKING, EVIDENTLY A SUCCESSFUL MAN OF AFFAIRS."

" Thank you. Good day, monsieur."

M. Dudinot slept badly that night. In spite of the lawyer's assurance to the contrary, he could not help thinking that he had attended one funeral too many ! Nor had he any heart for his modest breakfast. But a few minutes after ten o'clock he presented himself in the Boulevard Haussmann and was conducted immediately into the presence of M. Le Fere. Accepting a chair and a cigarette — the latter a luxury he seldom allowed himself— he strove to conceal his trepidation. M. Le Fere spoke kindly of the weather, of the Algerian situation, of their meeting of yesterday, and M. Dudinot held hands with himself very tightly and replied " Yes, monsieur," and " No, monsieur " in tones that seemed to issue from his well-polished boots. At last, however, the lawyer lifted a folded paper from his desk, viewed it, laid it down again, and spoke as follows :—

" My late lamented client, M. Jean Rotrou, was in many ways a remarkable man. Starting life as a poor boy, the son of peasant parents, he ended as one of the wealthiest men of Paris. It is probable that you knew him by reputation, M. Dudinot ? " The latter, however, shook his head blankly. " Is it possible ? But if, instead of saying to you ' Jean Rotrou,' I say ' Rotrou's Corsets ' ? Ah, I thought so ! My departed

friend was a great believer in advertising. But to continue. I have said he was remarkable, and so he was. But he was also—shall I say?—peculiar. One of his peculiarities, monsieur, was that he made few friends. Indeed, I had almost said none. He declared that he had no time for them, maintaining that only men of leisure could afford friendships. As for him, his business was his entire existence. He never married. So far as I know, he never had an affair of the heart. He was singularly self-sufficient. Besides myself, I doubt whether he possessed an intimate friend in all the world. That, monsieur, explains to you my curiosity when you so—ah!—unexpectedly appeared yesterday at M. Rotrou's obsequies. My first thought was that at last a relative of M. Rotrou had turned up; and when I tell you that only two years since, at my client's request, I instituted a most careful and exhaustive search for relatives, without the least result, you will understand my interest. Within the past two or three years M. Rotrou appeared to regret the lack of relations, even of friends. His health had begun to fail him, and it may be that the disposal of his wealth was on his mind. I tell you this, M. Dudinot, preparatory to reading to you a copy of the last will and testament of M. Jean Rotrou."

M. Dudinot's cigarette had expired and his expression had become one of pathetic bewilderment. M. Le Fere again took up the folded paper, and this time he opened it and began to read from it in an impressive, lawyerish voice. M. Rotrou declared himself of sound mind and commended his soul to his Maker. Then followed a long list of bequests: fifty thousand francs to the village of Auxtour, fifty thousand francs to the Church of Our Lady of Vaucluse, fifty thousand francs to the Society of Mercy, forty thousand francs——

On and on went M. Le Fere, leisurely, as though he found much pleasure in the recital. To M. Dudinot it sounded like a chapter of Genesis: "And Salah lived thirty years, and begat Eber: And Salah lived after he begat Eber four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters. And Eber lived four-and-thirty years, and begat Peleg: and Eber lived after he begat Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and begat——" M. Dudinot's attention wavered. Why, he asked himself, should he be summoned here to listen to the will of a man he had never laid eyes on? Doubtless he owed something to the late M. Rotrou in the way of amends, but surely——

"The residue of my estate I will and bequeath outright to the University of St. Cyr; provided, however, that should any person or persons display sufficient interest in my body as to be present at its obsequies such residue shall be divided equally between such person or persons and the aforesaid University of St. Cyr."

M. Le Fere ceased and cleared his throat impressively. "Offhand, M. Dudinot, I would say that your share will amount to about three million francs. That is, I believe, an underestimate rather than—— But let me get you a glass of water, monsieur!"

"M. LE FERE TOOK UP THE WILL AND BEGAN TO READ FROM IT IN AN IMPRESSIVE, LAWYERISH VOICE."

MARYTARY'S BIRTHDAY.

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

By H. B. CRESWELL.

Illustrated by G. E. Studdy.

NOW, one morning, it was very exciting for Marytary, and she woke up very early because it was her birthday and she was seven years old in the morning, but when she went to bed she was only six, so she must have changed in the night when she was fast asleep.

Of course she had lots of presents, and all the time she was undoing the parcels and dancing about the room with delight, Uncle George was talking in a low voice to her mother, and then he said :—

"Come here, Marytary." So Marytary got on his knee and he whispered a long, secret whisper to Marytary, and it made her very excited, and she said: "May Johnny come, too?" and Uncle George said, "Hush!" and then he whispered, "Yes," very softly.

And the secret was that Uncle George was going to take Marytary up to London quite early before dinner, and she was to go to the nicest shops and buy just what she chose with the money she had for her birthday, because it was not to be put into the Savings Bank this time; and in the afternoon she was to go with Uncle George to the Zoological Gardens. So Marytary went and told her mother, and her mother was pleased, but she said, "Uncle George spoils you"—though I think it is quite right to spoil little girls on their birthdays when they are good, and Marytary was a good little girl, and I love her very much, and so did Uncle George, and her mother did, too.

This is why Marytary simply rushed round to Johnny Peascod and told him to get ready, because he was to come, too, and he was as much excited as Marytary was.

Now these are all the things that Marytary bought with her money, and no one helped her.

First she bought a very nice crossbow and arrows, with a target to aim at, for Johnny Peascod, and he liked it very much. Then she bought a present for her mother, and you would think it was a bun with a real fly on it, and her mother thought it was, but when you touched it it was quite hard and it opened like a lid and there was an inkpot inside. And then she bought two pictures, both the same, because that was quite fair, one for Rose and one for Jane; and then she wanted to buy a walking-stick for Uncle George, but he said he would rather have a box of matches, so she bought a very nice box of matches and they cost only a penny, and it was very cheap. Then Uncle George said: "This is your birthday, Marytary, so you must buy yourself a very nice present with your money, and Marytary bought a real big doll's perambulator, so that she could take all her dollies out for a walk, and it had a real hood so that you could put it up if it rained, or if the sun was very hot. Then they all had dinner in a shop, and the waiter was very kind, and gave them everything Uncle George asked for, but I forget what they were, because they were quite different from the things you have at home. After that they all drove away to the Zoological Gardens, and Johnny and Marytary were rather naughty, but it was Johnny's fault, and they were frightened at first, but afterwards it was great fun, and now this is all the things they did.

First they saw the lions and tigers, and they will eat you, but they are in cages so they cannot get out. And they saw the bears, and they will eat you too, even the small ones, but I think they like buns best. Then they rode on the elephant, but they rode on the camel first, because the elephant was full. They saw the giraffe, and it is as tall as a high tree, but it will not eat you; and they saw the sea-lions fed, but they do not eat you unless you are a fish, and then they catch you. Then, after a long time, when they had seen the monkeys, and the parrots, and the snakes, and crocodiles—and they eat you—and the tortoises, it was time to go; it was too soon really, but Uncle George said, "Come along, children," and walked on. Then Johnny was naughty, but Marytary thought it was all in fun, and that is why she was naughty, too. And Johnny said, "Come on, Marytary, let's hide."

Now, there was a nice little house and the door was open. It was a little low door, and inside was nice clean straw, so Johnny crawled in and Marytary crawled in too, and they lay down at the back of this little room just as if they were in a real cave, because there were no windows. Very soon they saw Uncle George come back and go past the door, and Marytary wanted to jump out quickly and surprise him, but Johnny said, "Not yet." So they lay there very close together because it was so exciting, and it seemed a long time, and they were just going to come out and look for Uncle George

when they heard him coming, so they hid again ready to jump out.

Suddenly the door was shut and locked on the outside, and they were in the dark, for there was no window; and then suddenly another door in the side of the cave opened, and they heard the man whom they thought was Uncle George go away, and he was not Uncle George at all but the man who fed the bears and put straw for them to sleep on. Just then Marytary heard something sniffing, and she looked through the door which had been opened, and called out, but no one heard, for it was quite late and getting dark, and all the people had gone quite away and the keepers were having their tea.

Then Johnny said, "Give me the buns."

Now, Marytary had a bag of buns to feed the animals with, and there were lots of them left, and wasn't it lucky! Johnny took a piece of bun and flung it through the door and the bear went away to fetch the bun because it was a nice bun with currants, and when he came back to the door Johnny threw another piece of bun,

"MARYTARY HEARD SOMETHING SNIFFING, AND SHE CRIED OUT TO JOHNNY, 'LOOK!' AND JOHNNY LOOKED, TOO. IT WAS A BEAR!"

she cried out to Johnny, "Look!" and Johnny looked, too.

It was a *bear!*

Oh, dear me! I feel so sorry! what will they do, I wonder? Poor Marytary and Johnny had hidden in the den where the bear slept at night, and the evening was coming and the bear's keeper had shut the door where the straw was put through, and opened the door leading to the cage where the bear was in the day-time; so there are poor Johnny and Marytary shut up in the den with the bear, and I am so glad there was only one bear, and that he was a small bear, because if he had been a very big bear they would have been more frightened, and it would have been dreadful.

First Johnny tried to shut the door but he could not reach it without going right into the cage where the bear was, and the bear heard him and came and sniffed at him through the door, and his head came in further and further, and then Johnny kicked him, and it was brave of Johnny, I think, and it made the bear growl, but he did not come any further because he did not know who was in his den and he was trying to see, but it was dark. Then Johnny and the bear turned round and went back into his cage to find it.

But, oh, dear me! what will poor Johnny and Marytary do when Johnny has thrown all the buns into the cage and the bear has eaten them? I am afraid the bear will come into the den and eat them both up, and Johnny thought so too, and so did poor Marytary; but it was Johnny who knew what to do, and he told Marytary, and it shows what a clever and a brave little boy Johnny was, and how brave Marytary was; and if they had cried and not been brave I am nearly sure the bear would have eaten them, but you know he did not eat them because there are a lot more stories about Marytary and Johnny that happened afterwards.

Now the clever thing that Johnny told Marytary, and they both did, was this. They quickly crumbled all the bun that was left, except one nice big piece, into a lot of little pieces, and Johnny threw the crumbs all together right to the far side of the cage. Then when the bear was finding and eating all these little pieces, which took him a long time, Marytary and Johnny crawled out into the cage where the bear was, and stood near the door of the den, and

Johnny stood in front of Marytary with the nice big piece of bun in his hand. Directly the bear had licked up all the crumbs he turned round and saw Johnny and Marytary standing in his cage, and it made him growl, and he came up to Johnny, and I think he meant to eat him, but Johnny held out the big piece of bun, and the bear sniffed at it and was just going to eat it when Johnny suddenly threw it into the den they had just crawled out of. The bear growled and snapped his teeth, but he did not wait a moment but ran into the den to find the bun. Directly he was inside Johnny and Marytary shut the door and bolted it.

Ha! Ha! Ha! What fun! It makes me laugh. Marytary and Johnny laughed, too, and jumped about for joy, and so would you, I think. And the bear inside the den scratched at the door to try and get at them, but it was an iron door, and he could not, and he growled; and Johnny kicked at the door to tease him, and it made him growl more; but Johnny and Marytary did not mind, and it only made them laugh more because the bear was locked up in the den safe and sound, and he simply *could* not get out.

So there were Johnny and Marytary shut up in the bear's cage, but they were so happy now they were safe from the bear, that they did not mind very much, for they knew that in the morning someone would come and let them out, but they were very hungry, because they had not had any tea. Johnny was hungry, but he was not so hungry as Marytary was, because he had eaten nearly all the buns Uncle George had given him to feed the animals with. Then Johnny saw a lot of nice pieces of bun that were outside the bars of the cage. People had tried to throw them into the cage, but they did not go in, and the bear could not reach them through the bars, but Johnny's hand was much smaller than the bear's paw, so he was able to reach them, and he gave some to Marytary and he ate some too, and that is how they had something to eat after all.

Then it began to get dark, but the moon shone so that they could see one another, and they cuddled up in the corner of the cage close together to keep each other warm, and they turned up their coat collars and Johnny put his hands under Marytary's coat, and Marytary put her hands under Johnny's, so they were not very cold; and very soon they went to sleep, and the bear was asleep, too, I think, because he was not growling any more.

Now, in the morning they both woke up, but Marytary woke first. And it was quite light, but it was very early and no one came. Then Johnny pretended to growl and be a bear, and Marytary pretended, too, and tried to eat Johnny, so Johnny tried to eat her, and they both growled, and that woke up the bear, and they heard him growling, too, and it made them laugh.

Then Johnny said:—

"I know!" and Marytary said:—

"What?" and Johnny said:—

"We will dress up and be pretence bears."

Now, Johnny and Marytary both had on brown stockings, and Johnny had brown knickerbockers and a brown jersey, and Marytary had a brown jersey, too, because she asked her mother if she might have a jersey just like Johnny Peascod's, and her mother said, "Yes." So Johnny told Marytary, and she took off her petticoat and put on Johnny's knickerbockers, and that made her brown all over, and Johnny was brown all over, too, because the pants he had on under his knickerbockers were brown, so they were both quite brown, like bears, because they took off their coats and then they had on brown jerseys.

Then Johnny asked Marytary, and she felt in Johnny's pocket and there was a box of matches and a cork, and Johnny burnt the end of the cork and made Marytary's face quite black, and her hands, too; and then he made his own face quite black, and they took off their boots and made their hair quite rough, and if you

"THE BEAR INSIDE THE DEN SCRATCHED AT THE DOOR TO TRY AND GET AT THEM."

ooked into the cage a long way off you really would think they were two funny bears, because they looked just like them and crawled about and growled, and pretended to bite one another.

Now, there was a house quite close to the outside of the Zoological Gardens, and in this house there lived a man called Professor, and after his name he put these letters—F.R.Z.S.—and they meant that he was very clever and knew the name of every animal he had ever seen. This Professor had a friend staying with him and he was called Signor, because he was an Italian, and he was clever, too, and the Professor said to the Signor :—

"There is a new kind of animal called the monkey-cat-bear at the Zoological Gardens, and I have not seen it and you have not, either ; so if you will get up quite early before breakfast we will both go and look at it. I am informed that it is a quaint and eccentric quadruped comprising the characteristics commonly associated with the monkey, the cat, and the bear," and then he used such long words that I forget what he said, but the Professor and the Signor got up early before breakfast, and went to the Zoological Gardens, and that is why Marytary and Johnny Peascod, while they were pretending in the cage, saw two old gentlemen with spectacles looking at them and whispering, and they were the Professor and the Signor, and they both thought that Marytary and Johnny were monkey-cat-bears, because they had never seen monkey-cat-bears before. And Johnny and Marytary heard one say to the other, and it was the Professor, really :—

"These must be the creatures I spoke of. Are they not quaint ? "

And the Signor replied :—

"They are, as you say, quaint in the extreme. I wish I could see them better, the light is not very good."

"And I have got on my wrong spectacles," said the Professor.

When Johnny and Marytary heard this, they pretended to be bears all the more, and Johnny scratched at Marytary and she growled very hard.

"The creature with the mane is the *father*, doubtless, the other the *mother*," said the Signor, and he thought that Marytary's long hair hanging down all over the top of her head was a mane.

"Doubtless you are right," said the Professor, "and I observe the characteristic of the cat well established." And he thought it was like a cat when Johnny scratched at Marytary.

"Nevertheless," said the Signor, "they appear gentle creatures and, one would suppose, might be easily tamed and taught to sit up and beg," and he put his hand a little way in through the bars, and said, "Come here, then, old fellow."

Johnny pretended not to see his hand inside the bars, and went on biting at Marytary, and then he made a sudden spring and nearly caught it.

"Oh, my dear friend, do be careful," said the Professor. "I thought he had got you. These wild creatures are not to be trusted."

Then the Signor tried to tease Marytary by pushing in his umbrella, and Marytary turned round suddenly and snatched it out of his hand and pretended to try and eat it, and Johnny did, too.

Just then the Professor saw someone coming, and he knew him ; and he went up to speak to him, and it was Uncle George, who had come early to find Marytary and Johnny, because when he got home they were not there, and they will not let you go into the Zoological Gardens at night, so he had to wait till the morning. And the Professor shook hands, and asked Uncle George if he had seen the wonderful monkey-cat-bears, and Uncle George said, "No," so the Professor said :—

"Do let me show them to you, they are close by, such wild, savage creatures, they nearly ate my hand, and have quite eaten my friend's umbrella, I fear."

So Uncle George came, and Johnny and Marytary pretended more than ever, and Johnny scratched himself like a monkey, and Marytary licked her paw like a cat, and rubbed it behind her ear, and it made Uncle George stare for a long time, he was so surprised.

Then Marytary began to laugh, because she could not help it, and that made Johnny laugh, and then Uncle George knew at once, for he was able to see quite well without spectacles.

"Truly remarkable animals," said the Signor, "do you observe that they are laughing ? "

"Very remarkable animals, indeed," said Uncle George. "I know them well ; one is called Marytary, the other Johnny Peascod. Now then, you two children, no more of this ! Come out at once." And I think he was a little angry, but I think he wanted to laugh, too, and that is why he turned his back so that they could not see his face.

"We can't get out," said Johnny and Marytary together, and you never saw any two old gentlemen so surprised as the Professor and the Signor when they heard the monkey-cat-bears talking.

"Then how did you get in ? " asked Uncle George.

So Marytary told him.

"You deserve to have been quite eaten up," said Uncle George. Then he called one of the keepers, who had just come into the garden, to unlock the cage, but when the keeper saw Johnny, and Marytary with her face blacked and her hair all hanging over it, he tried to run away, because in all his life among wild animals he had never seen an animal who looked so wild as Marytary did, and Johnny too ; and it showed how well they were pretending. But Uncle George called him and told him it was all right, so he unlocked the cage, and Marytary and Johnny came out at last, and I am sure they were glad, and Johnny gave the umbrella to the Signor, and he had not bitten it, really. Then the keeper locked up the empty cage, and opened the door of the den, and the bear rushed into the cage, and I think he thought he was going to have Johnny and Marytary for breakfast all for himself, because when he saw the cage was empty he growled and roared

"'OH, MY DEAR FRIEND, DO BE CAREFUL,' SAID THE PROFESSOR. 'I THOUGHT HE HAD GOT YOU. THESE WILD CREATURES ARE NOT TO BE TRUSTED.'"

worse than ever, and all his fur stood up on end —he was so angry. But Johnny only put out his tongue at him, and it was rude, but no one saw him except Marytary and the bear. Then they all walked away together, and no one said anything, for Uncle George was still angry because Johnny and Marytary had been so naughty, and that made them sorry.

Now what do you think that cheeky little Johnny did? There was a notice painted up very clear in big letters, and it said, "Anyone poking sticks or umbrellas into the cages to tease the animals must pay five pounds, by order."

So Johnny said to the Signor:—

"When will you give Marytary her five pounds?"

And everyone stared at Johnny, and the Signor asked him what he meant.

"Why," said Johnny, "you tried to tease Marytary with your umbrella, and the notice says you must give her five pounds, by order."

Then everyone laughed and Uncle George laughed too, and told Johnny he was a little scamp, and turned him upside down and put him right over his shoulder, and Johnny liked it and said, "Do it to Marytary," and she liked it too, and Uncle George kissed her, so it was all right.

But Uncle George said, "I can't take you two wretched children through London in that state." So they went to the keeper's cottage, and his wife was not fat, but she was very kind; and when they had washed the black off their faces and hands, and brushed their hair, and dressed properly, you would not believe they had ever been animals in a cage, and they had a lot of water to drink, and a slice of cake each, because they were hungry.

Then they drove home to Uncle George's house in London, and Marytary's birthday was quite over; but they had sausages for breakfast and they cut them into little round pieces, and they were money; and Johnny had nine shillings but Marytary had thirteen, so she was richer than Johnny was. And after breakfast they went back to Rudbery with Uncle George, and when Marytary told her mother all that had happened, her mother said:—

"Promise me you will never go into a den with a live bear again."

And Marytary promised, and she kept her promise ever after, and Johnny kept it too, even when he was grown up, though no one asked him to promise.

And I promise you I will never go into a den with a live bear, so now you must promise me that you won't, either.

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

480.—THE KNIGHT AND THE CALENDAR.

I HAVE a large calendar for this year, and to mark temporarily a particular date I placed on it a chess knight, as shown in the illustration. It will be seen that it was placed on the 12th of the present month (November). I then noticed that the numbers on all the squares to which the knight could leap (by a chess knight's move) added up exactly 100. The encircled squares will show that this is so. Now, I asked myself, what is the first following date (other than the 12th of a month) that would also command squares adding up 100? The calendar for the months of 1920 will be printed in exactly the same form as that shown.

1919
NOVEMBER

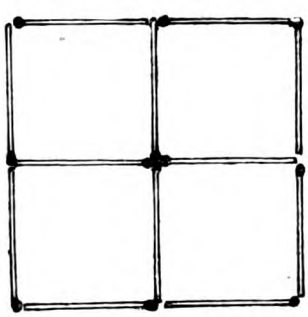
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		○		○		1
2	③	4	5	6	⑦	8
9	10	11	♘	13	14	15
16	⑰	18	19	20	㉑	22
23	24	㉕	26	㉗	28	29
30						

481.—THE PROFITEERING GROCER.

A GROCER in a small way of business had managed, by a course of profiteering, to put aside (apart from his legitimate profits) a little sum in £1 notes, 10s. notes, and crowns, which he kept in eight bags, there being the same number of crowns, and of each kind of note, in every bag. One night he decided to put the money into only seven bags, again with the same number of each kind of currency in every bag. And the following night he further reduced the number of bags to six, again putting the same number of each kind of note, and of crowns, in every bag. The next night the poor demented miser tried to do the same with five bags, but after hours of trial he utterly failed, had a fit, and died greatly respected by his neighbours. What is the smallest possible amount of money he had put aside?

482.—THE FIVE SQUARES.

HERE is a new little match puzzle that will perplex a good many readers, though they will smile when they see the answer. It will be seen that the twelve matches are so arranged that they form four squares. Can you rearrange the same number of matches (all lying flat on the table) so that they enclose five squares? Every square must be entirely "empty," or the illustration itself would show five squares—if we were allowed to count the large square forming the boundary. No duplicated matches or loose ends are allowed.



483.—A CHARADE.

MY *first* is found in every house,
From wintry winds it guards.
My *second* you will always find
In every pack of cards.

My *whole* a Scottish chief, well praised
By ballad, bard, and story,
Who for his country gave his life,
And, dying, fell with glory.

484.—BUYING CUCUMBERS.

"How much do you pay for those cucumbers?" asked the inquisitive visitor.

"Well," was the artful reply, "I pay just as many shillings for six dozen cucumbers of that size as I get cucumbers for thirty-two shillings." What was the price per cucumber?

Solutions to last Month's Puzzles.

475.—WHAT NATIONALITY?

IT will be seen from the illustration that by painting out the parts that are shaded we get the word S C O T C H.

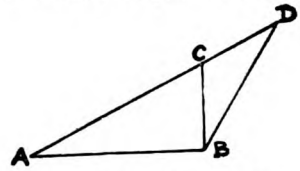
476.—EASY DIVISION.

7)710144927536231884057 9
10144927536231884057 97

Divide 7 by 7, and after you have written the 1 in the dividend write it also above. Then divide by 7 again, and write the 0 both below and above. Continue this process until you get a 7 in the dividend with no remainder, and your required number is then complete.

477.—MAKING A PENTAGON.

LET A B be the given line. Make B C perpendicular to A B and equal to half A B. Draw A C, which produce until C D equals C B. Join B D, and



B D is the radius of the circumscribing circle. If you draw the circle the sides of the pentagon can be marked off.

478.—MISSING WORDS.

THE words in their regular order are: Petals, palest, pastel, pleats, plates, and staple.

479.—A PUZZLE FOR ACCOUNTANTS.

IT should be obvious that, as there is no error in the pence in the balance, there can be no error in pence in the entry. The mistake must, therefore, be of the second class described, and we must look for £211.1.0 (with any or no pence) entered as £21.11.0. The difference, £189.10.0, will be the error sought.

GRAND CHRISTMAS NUMBER

The Cocoa-wise buy
FRY'S
Pure Breakfast
COCOA
300 GOLD MEDALS etc.
See Page 22.

SOUTHAMPTON STREET

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

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DEC 1919

1/3 NET

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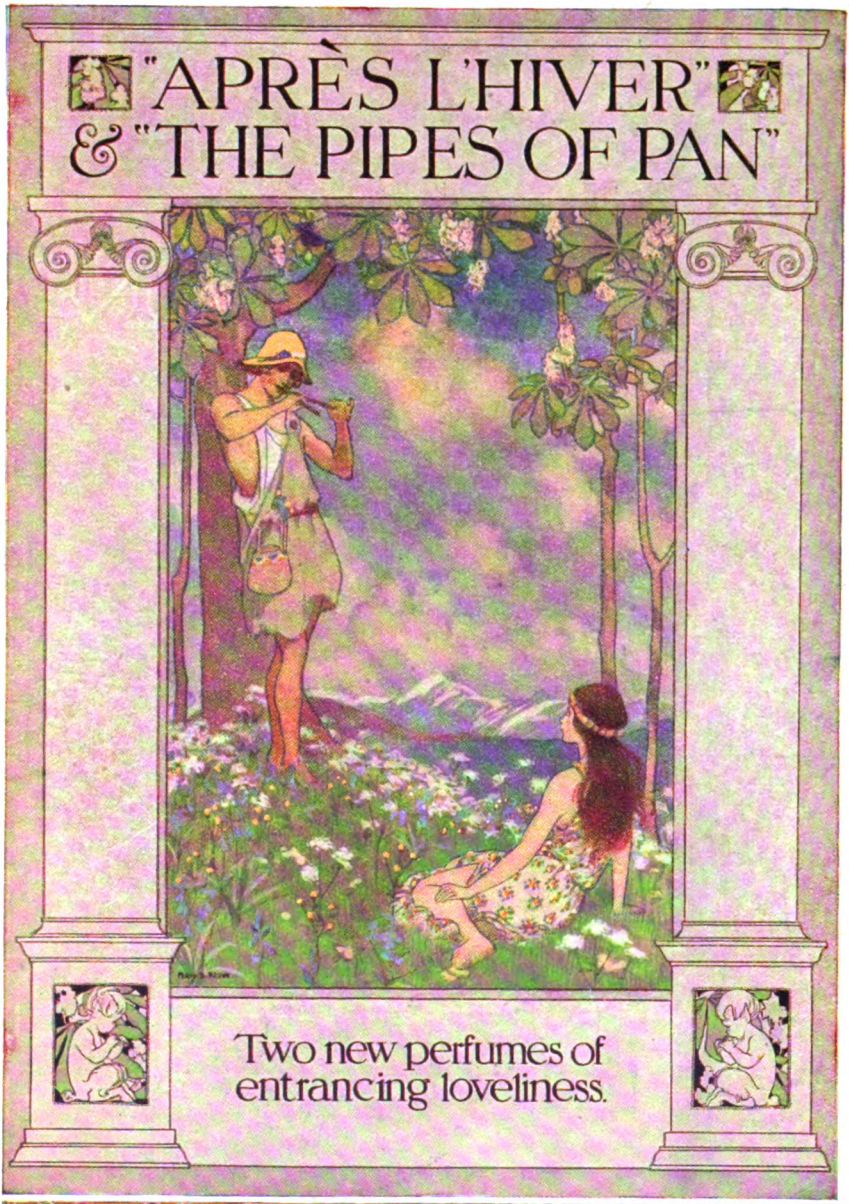

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مَنْ هُوَ الشَّاب

£100,000 Dead or Alive!

An Amazing Romance.

This huge sum was offered by the Turks for the arrest of a man—a man whose amazing career is

The Greatest Romance of Real Life

ever told. This man is Colonel Lawrence, whose life story, as told by Mr. Lowell Thomas, has drawn a quarter of a million people to the Covent Garden Opera House, where they have listened enthralled for two hours to the amazing story of the part Colonel Lawrence took in raising an army of 200,000 Arabs.

Colonel Lawrence's name previously was hardly known to the British public. He is now admittedly

One of our World-Heroes.

His life story has just come to light. For many years he lived with the Arabs. To them he became a great white god. They would not have betrayed him for all the gold in the world. At twenty-six he was

the uncrowned King of the Hejaz, Prince of Mecca.

His fame will go down to posterity. His amazing life has been written by Mr. Lowell Thomas, who met and lived with Lawrence in the deserts of Arabia.

THE THRILLING ROMANCE OF THIS REMARKABLE MAN WILL CREATE A SENSATION.

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE says:

"Everything that Mr. Lowell Thomas says about Colonel Lawrence is true. In my opinion, Colonel Lawrence is one of the most remarkable and romantic figures of modern times."

"THIS PIECE OF GLASS, SO THE STORY RUNS, WAS ORIGINALLY THE EYE OF AN IDOL IN LHASA."

(*See page* 504.)

The IDOL'S EYE

by

"SAPPER"

(H. C. McNEILE)

Illustrated by Graham Simmons

I.

"PERSONALLY, I don't consider there's a word of truth in the whole thing," said Denton, dogmatically. "All this mystery and spook stunt was started by hysterical old women, and has been kept alive by professional knaves, who fill their pockets at the expense of fools."

He drained his port, and glared round the table as if challenging anyone to dispute his assertion.

"There was a silly old aunt of mine," he continued, thrusting his heavy-featured face forward, "who bought a house down Camberley way two or three years ago. Admirable house: just suited the old lady. Special room facing south for the canaries and parrots, and all that sort of thing." He helped himself to another glass of port. "She hadn't been in the house a fortnight before the servants gave notice. They weren't going to stop on, they said, in a house where noises were heard at strange hours of the night, and where the clothes were snatched off the cook's bed. So the old thing wrote to me—I was managing her affairs for her—and asked what she should do. I told her that I'd come down and deal with the noises, and that if anyone started pulling my bedclothes off he'd get a thick ear for his trouble."

Denton laughed, and, leaning back in his chair, thrust his hands into his trousers pockets. "Of course there were noises," he continued. "Show me any house—especially an old one—where there ain't noises at night. The stairs creaked—stairs always do: boards in the passages contracted a bit and made a noise—boards always do. And as for the cook's bedclothes, having once seen the cook I didn't wonder they came off in the night. She must have weighed twenty stone, and nothing less than full-size double sheets could have been expected to remain tucked in. But do you suppose it was any good pointing these things out to the old dear? Not on your life! All she said to me was: 'Harry, my boy: there are agencies at work in this world of which we have no knowledge. You may not be able to feel with them; some of us can. And it is written in the Book that they are evil.'"

Again Denton laughed coarsely. "Twaddle! Bunkum! The only agent that she felt was the house agent, who was charmed at the prospect of a second commission so soon."

"She moved, did she?" said Lethbridge, our host.

"Of course she did," jeered Denton. "And the last I heard of the house was that it had been taken by a retired grocer with a large family who were perfectly happy there." He thumped his fist on the table. "The whole thing is entirely imagination. If you sit at the end of a dark passage, when the moon is throwing fantastic shadows, and imagine hard enough that you're going to see a ghost, you probably will. At least you'll fancy you see something. But that's not a ghost. There's nothing really there. You might as well say that the figures you see in a dream are real."

"Which raises a very big question, doesn't it?" said Mansfrey, thoughtfully. He was a quiet man with spectacles, who had so

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far taken little part in the conversation. "Even granted that what you say is correct, and I do not dispute it, you cannot dismiss imagination in quite the same manner as you do a dream. It may well be that half the so-called ghosts which people see or hear are merely imagination: but the result on the people is the same as if they were there in reality." His blue eyes were fixed on Denton mildly, and he blinked once or twice. "It takes all sorts to make a world, and everyone is not so completely devoid of imagination as you are, Denton."

"I don't know that I am completely devoid of imagination," said Denton. "I can see as far into a brick wall as most men, where a business proposition is concerned. But if you mean that I'm never likely to see a ghost, you're quite right." He was staring at Mansfrey, and his face was a little flushed. It struck me as he sat there half-sprawling over the table, what a coarse animal he was. And yet rumour had it that he was very popular with a certain type of woman.

Mansfrey sipped his port, and a slight smile played round his lips. Lethbridge noticed it and made a movement as if to join the ladies. For Mansfrey's smile was deliberately provocative, and Denton was not a congenial companion if provoked—especially after three glasses of port. His voice, loud enough at ordinary times, became louder: the bully in him, which was never far from the surface, flared out.

"Ghosts," said Mansfrey, gently, "are the least of the results of imagination. Even if you did see one, Denton, I don't expect it would worry you much." His mild blue eyes were again fixed on the other man. "It is not that manifestation of the power of mind that I was particularly thinking of."

Denton gave a sneering laugh. "Then what was it?" he asked. "Trying to walk between two lamp-posts and finding there was only one?"

"Personally," answered Mansfrey, "I have never suffered that way." Lethbridge looked at me uncomfortably, but Mansfrey was speaking again. "It was the power of mind over matter with regard to bodily ailments that I was thinking of."

"Good heavens," jeered Denton, "you don't mean to say that you're a Christian Scientist?"

"Up to a point, certainly," answered the other. "If it is possible, and we know on indisputable proof that it is, for a man to deliberately decide to die when there is nothing the matter with him, and having come to that decision to sit down on the ground and put it into effect—surely the contrary must be still more feasible. For in the case of the native who dies, his mind is acting against nature: in the case of the man who tries to cure himself his mind is acting with nature."

"Those natives who die in that manner have always been seen by somebody else's brother-in-law," answered Denton. "I'll believe it, Mansfrey, when I see it for myself."

"I doubt if you would," said Mansfrey. "You'd say the man was malingering even when he was in his coffin."

Once again I glanced at Lethbridge. It almost seemed as if Mansfrey, usually the mildest of men, was deliberately going out of his way to annoy Denton.

"And I suppose," he continued, after a pause, "that you absolutely disbelieve in the ill luck that goes with certain houses and other inanimate objects—such as the Maga diamond, for instance?"

"Absolutely," answered Denton. "And if I had the money I would pay a thousand pounds to anyone who would prove me wrong——" Then he laughed. "I thought you were reputed to be a scientist, Mansfrey! Funny sort of science, isn't it? Do you honestly mean to tell me that you believe a bit of carbon like the Maga diamond has the power to bring bad luck to its owner?"

"The last four owners have died violent deaths," remarked Mansfrey, quietly.

Denton snorted. "Coincidence," he cried. "Good heavens! man, you're talking like an hysterical nursemaid."

"When up against the standard of pure knowledge," returned Mansfrey, mildly, "quite a number of people talk like hysterical nursemaids. When one reflects how little one knows, and how much there is to be known, I sometimes wonder why even the cleverest man ever speaks at all." He started fumbling in his waistcoat pocket. "But talking of the Maga diamond, I've got something here that might interest you."

He produced a little chamois-leather bag, and untied the string that kept it closed. Then before our astonished gaze he tipped out on to the tablecloth what appeared to be a large ruby. It was a cut stone, and in the light it glowed and scintillated with a thousand red flames.

"Pretty thing, isn't it?" said Mansfrey.

"My dear fellow," cried Lethbridge, leaning forward, "is it real? If so, it must be worth a fortune. I'm some judge of precious stones, but I've never dreamed of anything to approach that."

"Glass," laughed its owner. "A particularly beautiful tint of red glass. No—it's not an historic jewel that I've got here, Lethbridge, but something which bears on what we have been discussing." His mild eyes once more sought Denton's face. "This piece of glass, so the story runs, was originally the eye of an idol in one of the most sacred

shrines in Lhasa. The Tibetans, as you know, are a very religious race—and this particular idol was apparently the 'big noise' amongst all their gods. Some young fools, on a shooting trip, managed to get to Lhasa—no mean feat, incidentally, in itself—and not content with that they violated this most sacred temple, and stole the eye of the god."

Denton gave a shout of laughter. "Good lads," he cried. "That's the stuff to give the troops."

Mansfrey looked at him gravely. "They were discovered by the priests," he continued, "and had to run for their lives. All quite usual, you see: the good old historic story of fiction. Even the curse comes in, so as not to spoil the sequence. I, of course, have only heard it fifteenth hand, but I give it to you as I got it. The thing is harmless, unless allowed to remain in the hand, or up against a man's bare flesh for a certain length of time. How long I don't know. The sailor I got it from was a bit vague himself—all he wanted to do was to get rid of it as quickly as he could. But if, so the yarn goes, it remains for this necessary period of time in a man's hand or up against him somewhere—the man dies."

Denton shook with amusement. "And do you believe that twaddle?" he demanded.

"I don't know," said Mansfrey, slowly. "There are one or two very strange stories about it." He prodded the glass gently with his finger, and the ruby lights shivered and danced till it seemed as if it was on fire. "A Danish sailor stole it from the man who sold it to me, on the voyage home. He was an enormously powerful, healthy fellow, but he was found dead the next morning with the thing inside his shirt. My sailor friend got it from a Chinaman in Chefoo. The Chink's assistant had recently stolen it out of his master's shop. He had been found dead with it in his hand, and the Chink was frightened." Mansfrey smiled, and put the bit of glass back in its bag. "Just two yarns of many, and they're all the same. Anybody who holds it, or lets it touch him for too long, dies. And dies to all appearances a natural death."

"And you really believe that twaddle?" said Denton, again, even more offensively than before.

Mansfrey shrugged his shoulders. "I don't know whether I do or don't," he answered. 'I myself have tested the thing; and as far as I can see, it is just a piece of ordinary red glass, but——" Again he shrugged his shoulders, and then replaced the leather bag in his pocket.

"Do you mean to say that you've been too frightened to hold the thing in your hand and prove that it's rot?" cried Denton. He turned to Lethbridge. "Well, I'm hanged! And in the twentieth century. Chuck the bauble over here, Mansfrey. I'll sleep with it in my hand to-night, and give it back to you to-morrow morning at breakfast."

But Mansfrey shook his head. "Oh, no, Denton," he said, "most certainly not. If anything *did* happen, I should never forgive myself."

The opposition only served to make Denton more determined than ever, and more objectionably rude into the bargain. Personally, I had been surprised at Mansfrey carrying such a thing about with him—it did not fit in with what I knew of the man at all; but I was even more surprised at his reluctance to allow Denton to have it. It was preposterous that he could really believe there was any danger to be feared from holding a piece of coloured glass in one's hand, and yet for five or ten minutes he remained obdurate.

Then, suddenly, he gave in. "Very well, Denton," he remarked, "you shall have it. But don't say I didn't warn you."

Denton laughed. "If your preposterous stories were to be believed, and came true in my case, I gather I shouldn't be in a condition to say much. But my ghost shall come and haunt you, Mansfrey. I'll pull off your bedclothes, and rattle chains in the passages."

We all laughed, and shortly after Lethbridge rose. As he got to the door he paused and looked at us doubtfully. "Of course it's all rot, and only a joke—but I think we might as well postpone telling the ladies until Denton gives it back to-morrow at breakfast. My wife is such a nervous woman, don't you know. Probably come running along to your room, Denton, every half-hour to see that you're still snoring."

Denton gave one of his usual bellows, and in a few minutes we had all settled down to bridge.

II.

It was Denton himself who insisted on his hand being tied up with a pocket handkerchief. The four of us were standing talking in his room before turning in: in fact, Mansfrey had already completed the first part of his toilet by donning a smoking jacket of striking design.

"Bring out your bally bit of glass, my boy," boomed Denton, jovially, "and put it right there." He held out a hand like a leg of mutton. "Then I'll close my fist, and afterwards you tie my hand with a handkerchief, so that I can't open it in the night."

But the idol's eye was not immediately forthcoming. "I tell you candidly, Denton," said Mansfrey, "I wish you'd give it up. I don't believe myself that there *is* anything

in it, but somehow——." His eyes were blinking very fast behind his spectacles; he seemed the picture of frightened indecision.

Denton laughed and clapped him on the back; and to be clapped on the back by Denton is rather like being kicked by a mule. I have had experience of both, and I know.

"You funny little man," he cried, and prepared to do it again, until Mansfrey discreetly withdrew out of range. "You funny little man—blinking away there like a startled owl. You know, Lethbridge, I do really believe that he fancies there's something in his blessed old glass eye from Lhasa. Give it to me, you silly ass," he said to Mansfrey. "I'll show you."

To say that Denton's speech was thick would be to exaggerate, but as I sat on the edge of his dressing-table, smoking a cigarette, I could not help recalling that, though Lethbridge and I had each had one whisky and soda during the evening, while Mansfrey had drunk only plain Vichy, the tantalus was nearly empty when we came to bed. Denton was, in fact, in a condition when, for peace all round, it was better not to annoy him.

Apparently the same idea had struck Lethbridge, for he turned to Mansfrey and nodded his head. "Give it to him, old boy, and let's get to bed. I'm dog tired."

"Very well," answered Mansfrey. "I'll get it. It is in my waistcoat pocket."

Slowly, almost reluctantly, he left the room, and went along the passage to his own. While we waited, Denton got into his pyjamas, and by the time Mansfrey returned he was already in bed.

"Here it is," said Mansfrey, holding out the little bag. "But I wish you wouldn't, Denton."

"Oh! confound you and your wishes," said Denton, irritably, stretching out his hand. "Put it there, little man, put it there."

The piece of glass rolled out of the bag, and lay for a moment glittering scarlet in Denton's huge palm. Then his fingers closed over it, and Lethbridge tied a handkerchief round his fist.

"I'll give it back to you at breakfast, Mansfrey," he said, turning over on his side. "And you can prepare to be roasted, my lad, properly roasted. Good night, you fellows: turn out the light, one of you, as you go."

I closed the door behind me, and strolled towards my own room. It was next to Mansfrey's, and I stopped for a moment talking to him.

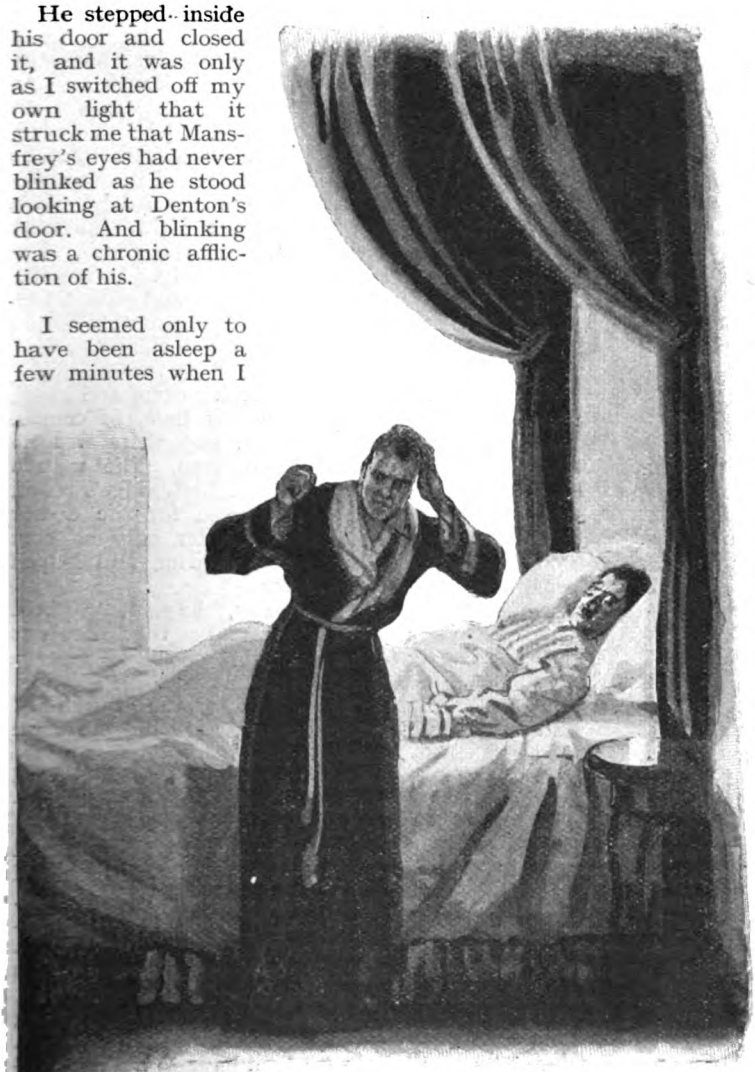
"What a great animal that fellow is," I remarked.

He did not reply at once, and I glanced at him. He was standing quite still, with his pale blue eyes fixed on Denton's room, from which already I fancied I heard the snores of the heavy sleeper.

"Animal is not a bad description of him," he answered, thoughtfully. "Not at all bad. Good night."

"AS WE PUSHED THE DOOR OPEN MANSFREY, WHO WAS STANDING BY THE DEAD MAN, TURNED HIS WHITE, STRICKEN FACE TOWARDS US. 'NOT A TRACE OF LIFE,' HE WHISPERED. 'NOT A TRACE.'"

He stepped inside his door and closed it, and it was only as I switched off my own light that it struck me that Mansfrey's eyes had never blinked as he stood looking at Denton's door. And blinking was a chronic affliction of his.



I seemed only to have been asleep a few minutes when I was awakened by the light being switched on. Lethbridge was standing by my bed, looking white and shaken.

"My God! man," he said, as I blinked up at him. "He's dead!"

"Who is?" I cried foolishly, sitting up in bed.

"Why, Denton," he answered, and the whole thing came back to my mind.

"Denton dead!" I looked at him horror-struck. "He can't be, man: there must be some mistake."

"I wish to God there was," he answered hoarsely. "Mansfrey's with him now—almost off his head."

I reached for my dressing-gown, and glanced at the time. It was just half-past four.

"I'll never forgive myself," he went on, as I searched for my slippers. "That fool story of Mansfrey's made a sort of impression on me, and I couldn't sleep. After a while I got out of bed and went to Denton's room. I listened outside, and you know how he used to snore. There wasn't a sound: absolute silence." He wiped his forehead with a shaking hand. "I don't know—but I got uneasy. I opened the door and went in. Still not a sound. Then I switched on the light." Lethbridge shuddered. "There he was, lying in bed, absolutely motionless. I went over to him, and put my hand on his heart. Not a movement: he was dead."

I stared at him speechlessly, and then together we went towards Denton's room. The door was ajar, and as we pushed it open Mansfrey, who was standing by the dead man, turned his white, stricken face towards us.

"Not a trace of life," he whispered. "Not a trace." He ran his hands through his hair, blinking at us despairingly. "What a fool I was, what an utter fool, to show him that thing."

"Oh! rot, man," said Lethbridge, roughly. "It can't have been that paltry bit of red glass. He's dead now, poor fellow, but he was a gross liver, and there's no getting away from the fact that he drank too much last night. Probably heart failure."

But Mansfrey only shook his head, and stared miserably out of the window to where the first faint streaks of dawn were showing in the sky.

"The point is, what we're going to do now," went on Lethbridge. He held up the hand holding the idol's eye, and then let it fall again with a shudder.

"Ring up a doctor at once," said Mansfrey. "He's dead, but you must send for one."

"Yes," said Lethbridge, slowly, "I suppose we must. Er—the only thing is—er——" he looked awkwardly from Mansfrey to me,

"this—er—bit of glass. You know what local people are, and the sort of things that —er—may be said. I mean, it will be a little hard to account for the poor fellow being found dead with this bauble in his hand, all tied up like this. The papers will get hold of it, and we shall have a crowd of confounded reporters buzzing round, trying to nose out a story."

Mansfrey blinked at him in silence. "You suggest," he said at length, "that we should take it out of his hand?"

"I do," said Lethbridge, eagerly. "After all, the poor chap's dead, and we've got the living to consider. It's bad enough having a death in the house at all: it'll be perfectly awful if it's turned into a nine days' newspaper wonder. I mean, it isn't as if there was any question of foul play," he glanced apologetically at Mansfrey: "we all of us are equally concerned, and it *can* only be a very strange and gruesome coincidence. What do you say, Mayhew?"

"I quite agree," I answered. At the time I was engaged in a big deal, and I was certainly not anxious for notoriety—even of a reflected nature—in the papers. "I suggest that we remove the stone, and that we destroy it forthwith by smashing it to pieces and throwing the bits into the pond."

Lethbridge gave a sigh of relief, and started to unfasten the handkerchief. "One moment," interrupted Mansfrey. "With all due regard for both your interests, my case is not quite the same as yours. We are not all equally concerned. The thing is mine: I gave it to him." He blinked at us apologetically. "I've got to think of the years to come, when the momentary unpleasantness will be forgotten, and you two—almost unconsciously—may begin to wonder whether it *was* a coincidence." He silenced our quick expressions of denial with a smile. "You may," he said, "and I prefer not to risk it. And so I will only agree to your proposal on one condition, and that is that one or other of you send the thing to some good analytical chemist and have it tested. I *know* that it is glass: I want you to *know* it too."

"Right," said Lethbridge, who would willingly have promised anything, so long as he was allowed to remove the glass eye. "I quite see your point of view, Mansfrey." He was busy untying the knot in the handkerchief. "Perhaps Mayhew will take it up to-morrow to town with him, when he goes."

At length the handkerchief was removed, and with obvious distaste Lethbridge forced back the fingers. There lay the glass, clouded a little by the moisture of the dead man's hand—but still glittering with its devilish red light. Then suddenly the arm relaxed and the idol's eye rolled on to the carpet.

"My God!" said Lethbridge, hoarsely, "put the vile thing away, Mansfrey, and let's send for a doctor."

"The bag is on my table," he answered. "I'll put it in." With his handkerchief he picked the thing up, and carried it away.

Lethbridge turned to me. "I don't often drink at this hour of the night," he said, "but when I've rung up the doctor, I'm going to open a bottle of brandy. I want it."

We tidied up the clothes, and with a last look at the great body lying motionless on the bed, we went out softly, locking the door behind us.

An hour later the doctor came and made his examination. By this time, of course, the whole house knew, and there was no question of any more sleep. The women had foregathered in Mrs. Lethbridge's room, and we three men waited for the doctor downstairs. He came, after only a short time in the dead man's room, and helped himself to a cup of tea.

"It may be necessary," he said, "to hold a post-mortem. You say that he was perfectly fit last night?"

"Perfectly," said Lethbridge.

"Forgive my putting the question," continued the doctor, "but did he have much to drink?"

"He was always a very heavy drinker and eater," answered Lethbridge, and both Mansfrey and I nodded in agreement.

"So I should have imagined," commented the doctor. "I have no doubt in my mind that, though he looked a strong, healthy man, we shall find he was pretty rotten inside. Brought on by over-indulgence, you know. He was essentially the type that becomes liable to fits later in life. Most unpleasant for you, Mr. Lethbridge. I'll do everything I can to spare you unnecessary inconvenience. But I'm afraid we shall have to have a post-mortem. You see, there's no obvious cause of death."

Lethbridge saw him to the door, and shortly after we heard his car drive off.

"May Heaven be praised," said Lethbridge, coming back into the room, "that we took that glass thing out of his hand, and that we didn't mention it to the women last night." He sat down and wiped his forehead. "Chuck that brandy over, Mansfrey; I want another."

Thus ended the tragic house-party. At nine o'clock I left for town, with the idol's eye in my pocket. I took it to a chemist and asked him to submit it to any tests he liked, and tell me what it was. Later in the evening I called for it, and he handed it back across the counter.

"As far as I can see, sir," he remarked, "it is simply a piece of ordinary red glass, of not the slightest value save for its rather peculiar shape."

I thanked him and took it home with me. The next day I returned it to Mansfrey with a brief note containing the chemist's report, and a suggestion that he should drop it into the Thames.

Lethbridge sent me a cutting from the local paper giving an account of the inquest and the result of the post-mortem.

"Death from natural causes," was the verdict; and gradually, in the stress of reconstructing a business which had suffered badly during the war, the matter passed from my head. Occasionally the strange coincidence came back to my mind and worried me: occasionally I even wondered whether, indeed, there was some deadly power in that piece of red glass: whether in a far-off Tibetan temple strange priests, performing their sinister rites round a sightless idol, kept count in some mysterious way of their god's revenge. Then I would laugh to myself and recall the doctor's words when he had made his brief examination of Denton—"We shall find he was pretty rotten inside."

"'TELL ME, MR. JONES,' I ENDEAVOURED TO SPEAK QUITE CALMLY, 'WHERE DID YOU GET THIS TABLE FROM?'"

And so, but for a strange freak of fate, the matter would have ended and passed into the limbo of forgotten things. Instead of which—but the devil of it all is, I don't know what to do.

Two days ago I wandered casually into Jones' curio shop just off the Strand. At times I have picked up quite good bits of stuff there, and I frequently drop in on the chance of a bargain.

"I've got the very thing for you, Mr. Mayhew," he said as soon as he saw me. "A couple of bits of old Sheffield. Just wait while I get them."

He disappeared into the back of the shop and left me alone. I strolled round, looking at his stuff, and in one corner I found a peculiarly ugly carved table, standing on three gimcrack legs. Ordinarily, I should merely have shuddered and passed on: but something made me stop and look at it a little more closely. Its proud designer, presumably in order to finish it off tastefully, had cut four holes in the top, and into these four holes he had placed four pieces of coloured glass—yellow, blue, green, and red. Mechanically I touched them, and to my surprise I found the red one was loose. Still quite mechanically I worked it about, and finally took it out.

A minute later Jones found me staring dazedly at something in my hand, which, even in the dim light of the shop, glowed and scintillated like a giant ruby.

"Here are those two bits of plate, Mr. Mayhew," he remarked. Then he saw what I had in my hand, and glanced at the table. "Don't worry about that. It's been loose ever since I got it. I must seccotine it in some day."

"Tell me, Mr. Jones," I endeavoured to speak quite calmly, "where did you get this from?"

"What—that table? A Mr. Mansfrey asked me to try and sell it for him months ago: you know, the gentleman who's just

written that book on poisons. Not that I've got any hope of obliging him, for it's a horrible-looking thing, I think."

A thousand wild thoughts were rushing through my brain as I stood there, with the dealer watching me curiously. If that bit of red glass came out of a table, it had never adorned an idol's face in Tibet. And as it *had* come out of a table, it proved that Mansfrey had lied. Why?

"I will take that table," I said to the astounded dealer. "I'll give you five pounds for it. Send it round at once."

"Shall I put that red thing in, sir," he asked.

"No," I answered. "I'll keep this."

I strode out of the shop and into the Strand. Why had Mansfrey gone to the trouble of inventing that long tissue of falsehood? Why? The question rang ceaselessly through my brain. Why should a writer on poisons and an able, clever man—I had heard of Mansfrey's new book—take the trouble to lie steadily throughout an evening, unless he had some object in view?

I turned into my club, and sat down to try and puzzle things out. And the more I thought of it the less I liked it.

At length I rose and, going to a table, wrote a note to Mansfrey asking him to come round and see me at my flat. He came last night—and as I said before, I don't know what to do.

Straight in front of him as he came into the room I had placed the table. The hole for the red glass was empty, the piece itself was in the centre of the mantelpiece. He stopped abruptly and stared at the little table: then he turned and the gleaming red thing in front of the clock caught his eyes. Then he looked at me, blinking placidly with a faint smile on his face.

"I didn't know you knew Jones," he said, sinking into an easy chair, and lighting a cigarette.

"I should like an explanation, Mansfrey," I remarked, sternly.

"What of? Denton's death? My dear fellow—surely it was quite obvious from the first. I killed him." He still blinked at me with his mild blue eyes.

"You killed him!" I almost shouted.

"Hush, hush!" He held up a deprecating hand. 'Not so loud, please. Of course I killed him, as I had always intended to do. He was one of the type of carrion who was not fit to live. He ruined my sister!" For a moment he had ceased blinking: then he went on again quite calmly. "But why should I weary you with personal history? Is there anything else you'd like to know?"

"A lot," I said. "Of course, your reason is a big extenuating circumstance, and undoubtedly Denton was a blackguardly cad—but that does not excuse you, Mansfrey, for murdering him."

"I absolutely disagree," he returned, gently. "The law would have given me no redress, so I had to make my own."

"Of course," I said, after a pause, "I shall have to tell Scotland Yard. I mean, I can't possibly condone such a thing."

He smiled peacefully and shook his head. "I don't think I would if I were you," he murmured. "Who was it who begged Denton not to take the idol's eye in his hand——?" He glanced at the glass on the mantelpiece. "It bore a striking resemblance to that thing you've got there, now I come to look at it. But, who was it? Why, me. Who overruled me? Well—neither you nor Lethbridge backed me up, anyway. Who was it suggested removing it before the doctor came? I think I am right in saying it was Lethbridge. Who insisted on a chemical analysis? I did. Who had it carried out? You, and I have the chemist's report in my desk. What was the result of the post-mortem and the coroner's inquest? Death from natural causes: no trace of poison." He blinked on placidly. "Oh! no, my friend, I don't quite see you going to Scotland Yard. In the extremely improbable event of that august body not regarding you as a lunatic, you would inevitably, and Lethbridge also, be regarded as my accomplices in the matter. You see, between you, in all innocence, you compromised yourselves very awkwardly—very awkwardly indeed." He rose to go.

"How did you kill him?" I demanded.

"A rare and little-known poison," he answered. "You'll find something about it in my new book. Probably the most deadly in the world, for it leaves no trace. It kills by shock, which induces heart failure. I dipped that glass—er—I mean the idol's eye, which is so like that bit of glass—into a solution of the poison before putting it in his hand. Then the next morning I dipped it in another solution. You considerately left it with me for some hours—a minute was all I required. From experiments I have carried out on animals, I should think he died in about half an hour. Er—good night."

The door closed behind him, and I sat staring at the red bauble glittering in the light. Then in a fit of rage I took it to the window and hurled it into the street below. It broke into a thousand fragments, and Mansfrey—who had just left the front door—looked up and smiled. "Er—good night," he called, and I could imagine those blue eyes blinking mildly.

And the devil of it all is, as I mentioned previously—I don't know what to do.

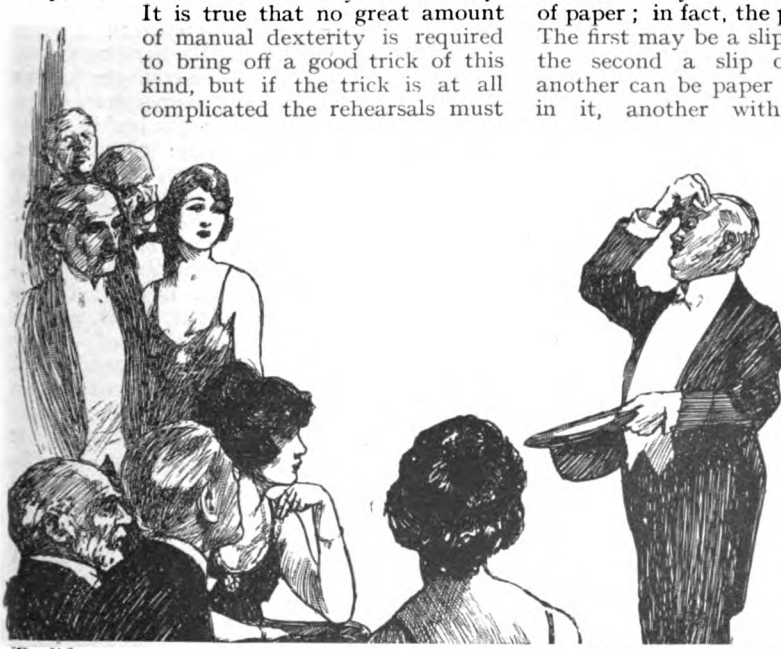
The secret of the mystery of the best of all conjuring tricks revealed for the first time.

"THOUGHT-READING" TRICKS *for* AMATEURS

by One who Knows

I BEGIN with a word of warning. Thought-reading tricks are terribly trying to the temper. Two persons are usually required for a good—or bad—thought-reading trick, and when the experiment goes wrong the performer privately blames his "medium," and the "medium" thinks that the performer should have blamed himself. In all probability they are both to blame.

Thought-reading tricks have a great fascination for amateurs, because they are supposed to be easy. In one sense they are easy, and in another sense they are not easy. It is true that no great amount of manual dexterity is required to bring off a good trick of this kind, but if the trick is at all complicated the rehearsals must be continued to the point of weariness before the trick is likely to be effective.



"THE PERFORMER HOLDS EACH SLIP TO HIS FOREHEAD AND ANNOUNCES THE NAME WRITTEN ON IT."

Here are a few suggestions for those who like to play at puzzling their friends.

A very simple one for a single-handed performer at a small party. The performer distributes slips to everyone in the room, and asks each person to sign his or her name on the paper, fold it up, and drop it into a hat. The performer takes out the slips one at a time, holds each one to his forehead, and announces the name written on it.

The performer must have a tolerably good memory and a certain amount of cheek. All his slips of paper are the same size, but they are not all of the same kind of paper; in fact, the papers are all different. The first may be a slip of glazed note-paper, the second a slip of rough note-paper; another can be paper with water-mark lines in it, another with faintly-ruled lines, another with little squares, and so on. You can even vary the colours of the paper, so long as you don't have colours too conspicuous. You go round the room when you distribute the papers, and you remember the order in which you arranged them before you handed them round. If your memory is not equal to this task you can have a few extra slips left over in your hand and have a few notes pencilled on one of them.

If you think that that trick is really

too simple to take in anyone, I reply that a trick is never too simple. Many of the best tricks are baffling to intelligent persons because they *are* simple. That sounds like a paradox, but it is the plain truth.

When the amateur has done that trick some kind person in the audience will probably suggest that they have seen something like it before, but ever so much better, because in this very superior trick the audience could write anything they liked, and the performer read the messages without unfolding them.

And this is how the performer can do that trick. He distributes more slips of paper, but this time they can be all alike. The papers are written on, folded up by the writers, dropped into the hat, and shaken up. The performer takes out a paper, holds it to his forehead, "reads" the message. The writer of the message admits that his thoughts have been read, and the performer continues until he has read every paper in the hat.

That trick is even more simple than the first. The performer has a confederate in the audience, and arranges with the confederate beforehand that he is to write a certain message on his paper and fold his paper in a distinctive way. A very good dodge consists in having the paper rolled up into a ball, because very few persons think of "folding" a paper in that way.

The performer looks into the hat, takes out a paper which he knows is not his confederate's, holds it to his forehead, and reads out his confederate's message. The confederate admits that the performer is right—for this fib he will be forgiven—and the performer opens the paper and reads to himself the message on it—somebody else's message, of course. He remembers this one, and takes out another paper, and "reads" that, but, of course, the message which he gives out is really the message on the paper which he has seen. He continues the trick in this way, taking care to leave his confederate's paper to the end. Then all the writers can identify their papers.

For the next trick the performer uses three handkerchiefs—a red one, a white one, and a blue one. The conjurer asks that they may be tied together into a string by their corners when his back is turned, and given into the keeping of a lady, who will consent to act as his medium.

When this has been done the conjurer asks the lady to stand up with her back towards him and place one hand behind her back; the other, holding the handkerchiefs in front of her, is out of his sight. He turns round, touches her wrist with one finger, and announces which is the middle handkerchief; it is not necessary, of course, to name the other two handkerchiefs.

The audience will naturally jump to the conclusion that the lady gives some sort of signal to the conjurer by the manner in which she holds her hand behind her back. This is just what the conjurer wants the audience to do; it gives him the opportunity of repeating the trick when the lady has both hands in front of her. He merely asks to be allowed to touch her arm in order to complete the contact of thought.

"SOME VERY PERSISTENT LITTLE FLAPPER WILL PROBABLY CHALLENGE THE CONJURER TO DO THE TRICK WHEN SHE IS HOLDING THE HANDKERCHIEFS."

Finally, some very persistent little flapper will probably challenge the conjurer to do the trick when *she* is holding the handkerchiefs. If the conjurer knows the flapper well he can then ask her if she is capable of sustained thought, but if he has the least fear that that question will cast a gloomy shadow over the evening's amusement he had better omit it. But, with a profession of doubt about the success of the experiment, he can try it with the flapper; in fact, he can try it with anyone in the room, and succeed every time. And if someone in the audience tries to dig a pit for the conjurer by tying only two of the handkerchiefs together the conjurer keeps clear of the

danger, and not only announces that only two of the handkerchiefs are tied together, but names the colours of the handkerchiefs.

The trick is worked by means of some very simple signs from a confederate—a man. His left leg is the sign for the red handkerchief and the right leg for the blue. If he sits with his left leg crossed over the right the conjurer knows that the blue handkerchief is in the centre; if his right leg is crossed over the left then the red handkerchief is in the centre, and if he does not cross his legs then the white handkerchief is in the centre. If only two handkerchiefs are tied the confederate puts his knees together, or puts one hand on one knee, as the case may be.

Simple as these directions are, I have known them to be muddled up by a man who forgot whether his left leg represented red or blue.

I am aware that this trick seems absurdly simple on paper, but it does not seem so simple when it is performed, because everyone naturally thinks that the lady who is holding the handkerchiefs must be giving some sort of sign to the conjurer. One good rule in any trick is: Put people on the wrong scent—if you can.

Now take a pack of cards. Have them shuffled and returned to you. Take off the top card and show it to the audience, asking everyone to think of it. You read their thoughts—or pretend to do so.

There are many difficult ways of doing this trick—which, of course, can be repeated with several cards—and no one good way of doing it by simple means. If the performer can produce his own cards without making the audience suspicious, so much the better for him, because he will take care to use cards which are transparent when held up to a strong light. Some American cards can easily be read from their backs in this way, and it is not necessary to hold them behind the light; the trick will work equally well if the cards are held some little distance from the light.

Failing this simple method, the conjurer must obviously obtain a reflection of each card in some way. Many opportunities for doing this will occur in any room, and the conjurer must watch for the best and take advantage of it. The glass in a picture-frame will give a reflection; a bright, broad gold ring on the third or little finger of the hand holding the cards will also do the trick. Under pretence of allowing everyone to see the cards easily the conjurer can light a candle and get a reflection in the silver candlestick; a highly-polished table or piano will also come in handy sometimes. The conjurer should remember that he need look only at the index corner of the card, and that that corner is the top right-hand one or the bottom left-hand one of a card.

One very good way of puzzling an ordinary audience—I am speaking, of course, to amateur performers—is to repeat the same trick several times and use a different method each time.

Here is a good series of puzzles of this kind.

The performer goes out of the room, and his "medium" explains what is to be done. The "medium" borrows a cigarette-case, and asks the owner to show everyone how many cigarettes there are in the case.

Everyone in the audience is to concentrate their thoughts on the number. Then the "medium" turns her back on the audience, and someone calls in the performer, who immediately says how many cigarettes there are in the case.

"Do it again," says someone, and the "medium" and the performer do it again.

Probably by this time someone in the audience will "get wise" to the trick, so I will explain the first stage.

After the lady—the "medium" should always be a lady—has handled the cigarette-case, she casually puts it down on a table, and the performer arrives at the number of cigarettes by noting the position of the case on the table. If you think of an ordinary die you will see how easily this can be done. The top left-hand counts as one, the top right-hand corner as two, the bottom left-hand corner as three, and the bottom right-hand corner as four. If there are five cigarettes, then the case is put in the centre of the table—or near the centre.

But supposing there are no cigarettes, or more than five? Nothing easier. By standing with her hands behind her back—a very natural position—the medium secretly signals to the performer that there are more than five cigarettes in the case, and that its position on the table indicates either six, seven, eight, nine, or ten. If there are no cigarettes in the case the lady holds it in her hand or hides it in some way.

When someone in the audience has come to the conclusion that the table has something to do with the trick, the performer does a little bluffing. He explains that he must see the case, but as for the table having anything to do with the trick—well, "hold it yourself, if you like."

The trick is repeated without the table. This time the "medium" gives the signal by her position in the room, treating the room just as she treated the table, one corner counting as one, another as two, and so on, the middle of the room counting as five. If she sits down, the case is empty. Of course the "medium" need not go quite into one of the corners; if she stands near it the performer will understand.

When this mystery has been partially penetrated the performer does a little more bluffing. The lady shall stand anywhere in the room, and once more the trick is repeated.

This time the " medium " gives the signals by the movement of her head ; of course, the movement is made before the performer returns to the room. Here is all the " code " necessary :—

Head turned slightly to left, looking towards ceiling—one.

Head in similar position but looking down—two.

Head straight, but looking towards ceiling—three.

Head straight, but looking down—four.

Head turned to the right—five.

When this trick has been repeated a few times it is just possible that one of the cigarettes may get broken. If this should not happen, the "medium" secretly breaks one, and when the performer returns he announces the number of cigarettes, and adds : " One is not perfect ; I am afraid you will not be able to smoke it ; it's broken."

The signal for this is holding a handkerchief in the left hand. If anyone should want to put a half-smoked cigarette into the case, the " medium " raises no objection ; her signal for this is holding her handkerchief in the right hand.

" Do it blindfolded," says someone, and the performer at once submits to the test. When he gets inside the room his hand is held for a second — only a second — by the "medium," who guides him to the centre of the room. In that second the trick is done —in this way.

The performer extends his hands slightly—a natural thing to do when one is blindfolded. If the " medium " takes the performer's left hand he knows that she is signalling " one to five."

Then : Performer's fingers held by " medium "—one. Hand held—two. Wrist —three. Arm—four. Sleeve—five.

If the performer's right hand is held he knows that the " medium " is signalling " six to ten," and if the lady merely touches his back for a second to guide him to his place in the room he knows at once that there are no cigarettes in the case. To vary the proceedings the performer and the " medium " can change places, and as a final test the " medium " offers to read the thoughts of the audience while the performer is not even in the room, and while she is blindfolded.

"THE 'MEDIUM' — WHO SHOULD ALWAYS BE A LADY —BORROWS A CIGARETTE-CASE."

The " medium " retires while the cigarettes are put in the case, and the performer superintends the job. He is then escorted out of the room under guard—to make sure that he whispers nothing to the " medium " outside the door, and the guard returns with the " medium " to the room.

If the " medium " is wise she will then prolong the trick for some minutes, pretending that her audience are not concentrating their attention on the number. Finally, as though by a great effort, she announces the number of cigarettes in the case, and she is right.

A very little practice is necessary for this finish to the trick—a finish which will come as a surprise to those who have heard something about " codes " used by second-sight performers.

The " medium " must arrange beforehand to stand near a certain spot in the room, not far from the door. Before returning to the room at the beginning of the trick she slips over one of her feet a loop of black thread. The end of the thread remains outside the door when the lady returns to the room.

The performer gets hold of the end and signals the number by a series of sharp pulls on the thread, with a slight interval between each one. The performer can take his time over this. Two sharp pulls close together mean that there are no cigarettes in the case.

Directly after the trick is done the " medium " goes out of the room to find the performer, when she takes the opportunity of slipping the thread off her foot and hiding it.

The trick must be practised, and the performer should signal to the " medium " by one continuous pull for a few seconds that he is about to begin the trick. The " medium " must not be far from the door. If the carpet is a light one use grey thread ; cotton is not strong enough.

Don't be tempted to repeat this trick.

The New Opera Glass.

[The Germans pride themselves on their knowledge of English. Shakespeare they claim as being really a German. A little book, " The New Opera Glass" (the title-page of which is here reproduced), published "for the use of English and American visitors," giving the plots of well-known operas, bears out these claims in the most surprising way. There is another claim which it might very well have put forth—that of being, quite unconsciously, the very funniest work ever produced by a German.]

THE
NEW OPERA GLASS:

Containing the plots of the most popular operas and a short biography of the composers

By

Fr Charley.

Fourth edition, revised and augmented.

Leipzig
Feodor Reinboth.

The Puritans.

COLONEL RICHARD is fallen in love to Elvira, danghter of Lord Walton, but she loves Lord Talbot, follower of the Stuarts and declare, that only her heart must deciding in this case. Mr. Brown, an officer, is inflaming the ambition of Richard, accepting the direction of the troops of soldiers. George, the brother of Lord Walton, in society with Elvira, has open her, that her father will nothing oppose to go in marriage with Falbot, were upon she is, of course, most happy.

Arthur, received from the people as hero, is greeting the bride, but impossible for him to partake on the churchvisite, obliged to carry on the strange before the parliament. With the assistance of Arthur and Henritte the prisoner escape from the fortification. Elvira, fancing the lover faithless is fading in insanity. George is informing the public from Elvira's insanity. Richard declared the dead of Arthur Talbot throngh the parliament as betrayer, but he is escaping. Arthur, residing in the country-house Waltons, hearing the song Elvira's, is answering upon her song. Now he is hearing his pursuer, but they are avoiding the garden and Elvira, enticing by the song, is coming down the terrass. Hearing the deliverance of him through the Queen, she is pardonning him. Now the pursuer are coming a second time ; Elvira, hearing the beat of drum, is falling a farther time in insanity. The soldiers entering, accompaguied by Richard, Brown, Georges, to imprison Arthur ; notwithstanding the requests of Elvira the puritans are inexorable. In the last moment a letter arrives, that the house of Stuarts has falling totaly and now the utmost enjoyment was every where.

Medea.

Arona in the Royal palace at Korinth. Girls are congratulating Dirce at her marriage with Jason, who is most melancholy. The passing argonauts are presenting their prices of their victories, but the heart of Dirce is filled with affliction by remembering on Kolchis, the leaved wife of Jason. But he submit her : beeing allways infortunatly for me.

A captain entered, announcing the arrival of a wife black dressed before the door of the palace.

Medea reveals the veil and the people is flying for her. Kreon reprimand her from the Land and is going away passionately. Medea is forced to go but not before swear bloody vengeance.

She leaves the palace and is going to the temple, awaiting the farther solution. During this time she reflects her vengeance : to kill their own children and after them Dirce. Their children are saved, but Dirce, is dying through her own cloth and diadem, who were filled with poison by Medea. Medea, with a dagger in the hand, surrounded by three Eumenids, leaves the place, flying through the air upon a wagon volcanic.

The taming of the refractory.

Text after Shakespeare.

First act : Street in Padua, before the house of Baptista, a rich nobleman. Lucento, lover of Bianca, and his friends are singing her songs.

Now appears Hortensio, lover of the same, singing her also a senerade. Laughing about that, going away, during the two lovers are ringing. Baptista separates the two, telling that the time is not still coming for Bianca. Each

lover resolves to serve the house of the nobleman as teacher, gaining on this way the love of Bianca.

Now Petruchio, a nobleman from Verona, appears. Hearing, that here is a girl also haughty as he wish her to his wife: "She is a woman, created for such a man."

Second act: The two girls going in the garden. Baptista appears in the room, attended by Petruchio, Hortensio as teacher of music and Lucento, teacher of language. Petruchio asked Katharina for his wife, during the other lovers are gone in the garden, Petruchio renewed his solicitation; together with her he is enjoyed from the good humor of the girl and is fixing short hand the wedding-day on the next monday.

Third act: The whole guests are together; only the bridegroom is not there. After the guests are gone away Petruchio appears and now the wedding is beginning. After the wedding Petruchio declare to depart without delay. The whole guests begging to rest; but invain. Katharina herselves is begging; as she is commanding to rest he is carry away her violent.

Fourth act: Room in Petruchio's house. Petruchio bursting for anger about all things; nothing can satisfying him. Katharina is nearly broken in the hearth; but she loves him and her refractory ist justly going away. Petruchio also loves her and after some quarrels their hearths are finding together to a happy life.

Romeo and Julia.

Text after Shakespeare.

First act: Palace Capulet. Masquerade. Capulet greeting his guests. He is introducing his daughter Julia. Romeo, a Montague, seeing Julia, is falling in love to her, which is returning by her without to know another. Romeo hears, that Julia the daughter of Capulet. Tybalt, the nephew of Capulet, is going away with Julia; Romeo crying: "God with you". Tybalt renown Romeo, the enemy of his house; the two are quarrelling, but Capulet smooths the quarrell.

Second act: Pavillon in Capulets garden. Romeo singing from the love to Julia; Julia going in the garden, singing also from the love to Romeo. Their hearths are finding togother and after lovely sweers are going from another.

Third act: Romeo visiting Lorenzo, the monk, begging to help him to be united with Julia; he is ready for that and Romeo and Julia are becomes man and wife. In the battle with Tybalt he murdered him.

Fourth act: Romeo and Julia are sweet united in the room of Julia; beeing banished from the city he must fly. The dying father of Julia wished to see Julia as wife from the count Paris, but beeing Romeos wife Lorenzo is helping her from the fatal situation.

Fifth act: Romeo enter; he is seeing his wife Julia in the apparent death. In the meaning of her really death he is thrinking a bottle poison wishing to be united with her also in the death. In the same moment Julia awaked. Willing to fly the death is coming: Romeo falling on the bottom, Julia takes the sword and murdered herselves.

Gudrun.

First act: Gudrun's castle. Morning dwilight. Hartmut, son of Gerlind, appears, seeing his mother and is coming near to her on the mount. Gerlind bursting for anger about the generation of their proprietors. Hartmut appears and Gerlind too. Gudrun is frightened and will gone away. Hartmut begs for Gudrun, for whom he feels love in the hearth.—Gudrun perceive Gerlind, offering her life, but Gerlind: come to my castle to be the wife of Hartmut.—Now the castle is burning. Gudrun will going in the flames, but Hartmut takes her away.

Second act: Castle of Gerlind near the see. Hartmut seating; observing Gudrun, near the fire. She is becomes servant of Gerlind. Soldiers are molesting her. Hartmut defend her. Gerlind ask Gudrun as wife for Hartmut, but she is refusing. Now a boat is in sight, with Herwig and Wate therein, finding Gudrun sleeping. The leaves the place. Gudrun awakes and finding a small cross on the shoulder, she know, that the sawage is near. Now she declared to become the wife of Hartmut.

Third act: Gerlind near the altar, begging to enjoy Hartmnt. Herwig and Wate are near and are amused from the plays of the people.

Gerlind announce that Gudrun become today wife of Hartmut and she appears, wonderful dressed. Now she declared not never to become the wife of Hartmut.

Gerlind, finding herselves deceiving, will murder Gudrun, but Hartmut is defending her a second time. Herwig and Wate are discovered himselfs and now Gerlind, bursting in rage, is running in the pile of wood and is stabing herselves. Hartmut her following.

The merry wifes of Windsor.

Text after Shakespeare.

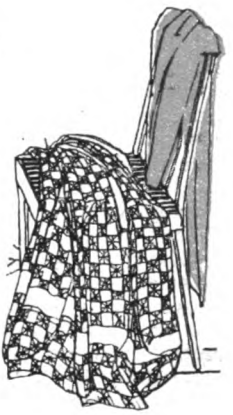
Sir John has written two love-letters to Mrs. Fluth and Mrs. Reich. They resolved to take reveange to him. After leaving the stage their husband appears attended by Messrs. Spärlich und Cajus. The Stage is changed: Mrs. Fluth awaits Mr. Falstaff; Mrs. Reich entered too and now the wonderfull seene Mr. Falstaff in the clothes-backets.

Second act: The same play: Falstaff appears at the second time. Now he is putted in the cloths of an old aunt, whom is forbidden the house of Mr. Reich. After some merrily scenes he leaves the house as an old woman, attended by the strike of Mr. Reich's stick.

Third Act: Room in Reich's house. The married couples are in the best humour, the wifes have confessed and now they have the intention the old Falstaff to punish the third time.

Changement of the stage: Midnight, in the forest with a hunting house; all persons appears; at least Falstaff too. The two wifes are greeting him; singing a Terzett. Suddenly ghosts are appearing, amusing herselves to strike Falstaff in the best manner. Cajus and Spärlich the lovers from Anna are also at present; but Anna loves Mr. Fenton, with whom she is band at last for ever.

THE SPRING FROCK



by

P. G. Wodehouse

ILLUSTRATED BY
POPINI

ROSIE was going to buy a new spring frock for George's birthday. Looking at that sentence again, I see that it is open to misconstruction. The frock was for herself, but it was to be bought in honour of George's birthday and flashed upon his admiring gaze for the first time on that occasion. Altogether, taking it all round, George Mellon's twenty-fifth birthday promised to be one of the biggest things in history. In the afternoon he was going to strike his employer for a rise of salary; in the evening he and Rosie would dine at the McAstor instead of at the red-ink place they usually frequented; and at night they would take in a show, with possibly a bite of supper afterwards at a cabaret place. A formidable programme, and one that made it imperative that Rosie's frock should not be out of the picture. She had been saving all the winter to buy a really irreproachable frock, and the money was in the bank, straining at the leash. All that remained was to make a good selection.

You probably know Rosie by sight. She sits in a sort of kiosk in front of one of those motion-picture palaces which have sprung up in recent years like a rash on the face of our fair city. You hand your money in through a little pigeon-hole in the glass front of her den, and she presses a button, causing a cardboard ticket to leap at you out of a brass slab. Thus far, you may argue that I have not sufficiently identified Rosie, every city being full of girls who do conjuring tricks in glass cages. True. Since the movie delirium set in, there are a great many girls who do this. But Rosie is the one who smiles. The others give you your ticket with a sort of aloof hauteur.

Rosie is different. Rosie beams at you. She has a cheerful little face, with a nice, wide mouth; and, when you push your hard-earned through the opening in the glass, a flash of white teeth encourages you to believe that, after all, you may not be going to waste your evening. You go in feeling heartened, with a vague impression that Rosie must be rather a nice girl. In this you are perfectly correct.

George Mellon, the party of the second part, is also, curiously enough, a door-hound, a keeper of the gates, and a dweller upon the threshold. But he works by day. He is the presentable young man who sits in the ante-room at the offices of the *Ladies' Sphere*, and keeps people from seeing the editor. Editors, who are human beavers, industrious little creatures who work hard and shrink from the public gaze, generally employ, to ensure privacy, a small boy with red hair, a tight suit, and an air of having seen all the trickery and wickedness in the world. At the *Ladies' Sphere*, however, where beautiful and refined women are popping in and out all day like rabbits, something with a little more tone is required; and George landed the job against a field of

twenty-six competitors. This should enable you to get an adequate angle on George? It is not every young man who can head off without offence lovely creatures in Paris frocks and mink coats, and convince them simultaneously that it is the editor's dearest wish to have a long, cosy chat with them, but that he can't see them this morning. Men with less diplomacy than George have held ambassadorships in foreign capitals.

It was this manner of his that had first attracted Rosie, when she had called one morning to see the editor.

"Have you an appointment, madam?" George had inquired, bending suavely over the little wooden gate with the air of a plenipotentiary at the Court of St. James exchanging compliments with a Princess of the Blood.

Rosie said she had no appointment.

"Then I fear," said George, with manly regret, "that it will scarcely be possible for you to see Mr. Hebblethwaite to-day. Mr. Hebblethwaite is exceedingly busy just now. The magazine goes to press to-day." The magazine was always going to press when people tried to get past George. "If you would care to leave a message——?"

"ROSIE SITS IN A SORT OF KIOSK IN FRONT OF ONE OF THOSE MOTION-PICTURE PALACES."

"I only wanted to ask him if he would mind giving me the 'Ten Delicious Morsels from the Chafing-Dish' that he had in the March number. I cut them out, but I lost them."

"Our Publishing Department would attend to that," said George. "If you would care to leave your name and address I will see that they are forwarded to you."

And in the short space of time which it took Rosie to write down her name and address, George had headed off two artists and a short-story writer. Rosie felt that this was no ordinary man.

George must have conceived an equally flattering opinion of her; for that same evening he called at her address in person, bearing the March number; and, so pleasantly and swiftly did their acquaintance progress that, before he left, Rosie had cooked Delicious Morsel Number Three on her chafing-dish, and they ate it together. Rosie was a wonderful cook, and it may be that George, who had suffered much from boarding-house meals, acquired at that moment his first yearning for domesticity.

All through the summer and autumn their intimacy had ripened, and in the middle of November George proposed. They decided that they would get married immediately after his next rise of salary, and George had fixed the beginning of May as the date for negotiating that business deal. Balmy spring, with all its softening influences, would have had a chance by then to work on Mr. Hebblethwaite and render him malleable.

"But, oh, George!" said Rosie. "Suppose he doesn't give it to you!"

"He will. He knows I'm a valuable man."

"Of course you are. But——"

"There were twenty-six others applied for the job same time as me, and I copped. That shows you."

"I know you're wonderful," said Rosie. "But still——"

"It isn't everyone," said George, "who could do my job. You can't go offending people. But you've no idea what an amount of cheek women have! Why, the first week I was at the office, a female got past me by saying she was the boss's wife. She looked all right; she spoke all right. So I thought she *was* all right, and I opened the gate. In about ten minutes out she came, said good morning, with a nice smile, and hooked it. And two seconds later I'm rung for, and there's the boss chewing holes in the carpet and smashing up the furniture with his bare hands. Seems she was a lady book-canvasser—and, before he could get rid of her, she had landed him with 'Historic Heart-Breakers,' highly educational and as interesting as a novel. Since then I've played it safe. Nobody gets past me without an appointment. The boss knows that, and values me accordingly."

"But Mr. Hebblethwaite looks so fierce. I'd die of fright if I had to ask him for a rise."

"IN THE SHORT TIME IT TOOK ROSIE TO WRITE DOWN HER NAME AND ADDRESS, GEORGE HAD HEADED OFF TWO ARTISTS AND A SHORT-STORY WRITER."

George felt in his inner-pocket and produced, with a certain complacency, a cutting from the advertisement pages of the magazine which employed him.

"I might have felt that way once, but the other day I came across this. I've written for the book. It looks to me like the goods."

The cutting showed a picture of a resolute young man with a clean-cut face and a strong mouth, pointing a minatory finger at an elderly man with a pointed beard. The elderly man was cowering down in his chair and obviously getting the loser's end of the mix-up. Beneath the picture were the words :—

LOOK HIM IN THE EYE AND WIN.

And then :—

No matter how big he is, no matter how powerful, he will listen, heed you, and respect you. Don't flinch. Make him drop his glance or turn his gaze, and your battle is won. What battle ? Your every battle—the battle you must fight every day with the men who block your way to success.

Have courage and show it. "Courage for what ?" you ask. The courage to assert yourself, to demand and get your rights ; the calm, steady, unwavering courage that shows through your eye to every man you meet.

Send the coupon below and let us mail to you—absolutely free, for examination—a copy of this sensational new book, "The Will and Its Training," by Otis Elmer Banks, Ph.D.

Have Courage, and the world is your oyster.

Rosie was impressed.

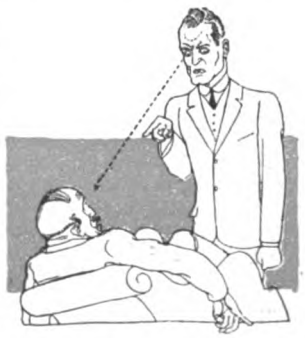
"Why should the world be an oyster ?" she asked.

"I don't know," said George, frankly. "I didn't understand that bit myself. But that's not the point. The whole thing is that I mean to train myself scientifically and then go in and win. You can see by what it says here that it'll be like taking money from a child's bank. Very likely I sha'n't hardly have to ask. Probably he'll unbelt directly he meets my eye."

So that was settled, and it seemed to Rosie to make it all the more imperative that she should not let down her end of the coming campaign. If George was going to go through an ordeal like that for her sake, the least she could do was to reward him by being a credit to him in the matter of a spring frock. As the days went by Rosie began to regard the spring frock as a sort of symbol of her love and of her worthiness to be loved. Her future seemed to hang on it.

The process of buying a spring frock, especially if you wait till spring to do it, is not so simple as it might seem to the lay mind. The big room at the big store which Rosie had selected was crammed to suffocation when she arrived. Women of all sorts and sizes were competing for the attention of the sales-girls. The assemblage looked like the mob-scene in a motion-picture. Large women jostled small women ; short women jostled tall women ; thin women and stout women pushed one another and everybody else impartially.

Rosie sat down in a corner to wait. It was the first warm day of spring, and she felt exhausted. But, because she was Rosie and combined an out-size in hearts with a small size in bodies, it was not her own tiredness that compelled her pity. She was sorry for the sales-girls. They were working so terribly hard. Rosie watched them dive into mysterious cupboards, come out laden with frocks and more frocks, and exhibit these to the customers in much



"LOOK HIM IN THE EYE AND WIN."

the same manner as the waiter at your restaurant shows you the lobster—but without the latter's optimism. The waiter is confident and cheery. He knows there is going to be a happy ending. His air is the air of a man concluding the last trifling formalities of a successful business operation. But these girls who were parading spring frocks had the disheartening knowledge, the fruit of long experience, that they were probably wasting their time, and that most of the women they served had no intention of buying, but had merely come there to play at shopping.

"WOMEN OF ALL SORTS WERE COMPETING FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE SALES-GIRLS."

Presently the crowd thinned. It was near closing-time. The big room presented an after-the-battle appearance. Spring frocks lay about on tables as if they had swooned there from exhaustion. The air was close and heavy. The sales-girls stood in twos and threes among the wreckage like the survivors of a forlorn hope. One of them perceived Rosie and limped towards her in a depressed way. Rosie could almost see her thinking. Plainer than words, her pale face was saying, "Oh, Lord! Another of them!"

"Can I attend to you, madam?"

Rosie felt shrinkingly apologetic. She had forgotten that she had a headache herself, and that she had been waiting patiently for nearly an hour. She only felt that it was brutal of her to keep this poor girl working a moment longer.

"I want to look at some frocks, please."

The sales-girl's expression seemed to say that her worst fears had been confirmed.

She walked slowly away, picked up one of the dresses that had fainted on a near-by chair, and returned, her listlessness more marked than ever.

The frock she bore was in a sense a frock. In shape and material it conformed to the definition. But the mere sight of it sent a shudder through Rosie, by so much did it miss being the ideal of her dreams. It had no poetry, no meaning, no *chic*, no *je ne sais quoi*, no anything that was attractive and inspiring. Worse, it looked vulgar. It was a loud black-and-white check, and one glance told Rosie that she would look awful in it. She had opened her lips to denounce and reject the horrid thing when she caught sight of the girl's face.

Girls who live alone and support themselves—like Rosie—come to acquire something of the masculine attitude towards life. They lose the woman's inborn gift of shopping, and acquire in its place that consideration for the other party to the transaction which marks the average male. A man whose aim it is to buy a pair of trousers does not stand coolly by while the attendant exhibits his entire stock, and then go off without making a purchase. A brief "Gimme those!" and his shopping is finished. Rosie had this male characteristic. She hated giving trouble. Even in ordinary circumstances, it pained her to have to refuse to buy. And now, looking at this pale, tired girl before her, she forgot all about the vital importance of finding the one spring frock which Heaven had destined for her from the beginning of things. All she felt was that she must get the business finished quickly and let the poor girl go home.

"That will do splendidly," she said.

The sales-girl blinked. This was one of the things that didn't happen. Then, as realization came to her, her eyes lit up. Their grateful gleam was Rosie's recompense. And she needed some recompense, for directly the words were out of her mouth she knew what she had done.

The memory of a kind action is supposed to be an unfailing recipe for happiness. Boy Scouts grow fat on it. But Rosie, as she went to meet George at the Hotel McAstor on the night of his birthday, felt none of that glow of quiet content which she might reasonably have expected as her right. On the contrary, she was miserable and apprehensive. Man—which includes Woman—being the ruler of creation and having an immortal soul and other advantages, ought to be superior to such trivialities as clothes. A quiet conscience is more important than a loud suit. But, such is human frailty that the best of us lose our nerve if we feel that our outer husk is not all it should be. Rosie knew that she did not look *right*. And when

a woman feels that, she might just as well go home and get into a kimono.

The situation was rendered more poignant by the fact that George was not as other men. George was employed at the offices of a magazine which dictated the fashions to a million women, where even the short-hand-writers looked like fashion-plates and every caller presented to his gaze the last word in what was smart. George, therefore, naturally had a high standard. Something special was required to win his trained approval. And she was coming to meet him at a fashionable restaurant in a black-and-white check frock that was not only hideous, but hardly respectable.

As she got off the car she saw him waiting outside the restaurant. He looked superb. George was always a great dresser.

She hurried towards him with a sinking heart, gamely forcing her face into a smile.

"Here I am, dear."

"Halloa!" said George.

Was his voice cold? Was his manner distant?

"Many happy returns of the day!"

"Thanks."

Yes, his voice was cold. His manner was distant. And the dull, disapproving look in his eye!

There was a momentary silence. They stood aside to allow a stream of diners to go in. Rosie looked at the women. They were walking reproaches to her. They were smart. They glittered. A sudden panic came upon her. Something told her that George would be ashamed to be seen with her in a place like the McAstor.

"I say, Rosie."

There was embarrassment in George's voice. He gave a swift look over his shoulder into the crowded, prismatic lobby of the restaurant.

"I don't know that I'm so crazy to have dinner here," he said, awkwardly. "How about going somewhere else?"

The blow had fallen. And, like most blows that fall after we have been anticipating them, it had an unexpected effect on its victim. A moment before she had felt humble, ashamed of herself. But now, when George had come out into the open and as good as told her in so many words that he shrank from being seen with her in public, a fighting spirit which she had never suspected herself of possessing flamed into being. All her unhappiness crystallized into a furious resentment. She hated George, who had humiliated her.

"I don't mind," she said.

"Darned noisy, crowded place," said George. "I've heard the service is bad, too."

She despised him now, besides hating him. It was pitiful to see him standing there, mumbling transparent lies to try to justify himself.

"Shall we go to Giuseppe's?" she asked, coldly.

The question was a test. Giuseppe's was where they always went, one of the four hundred and eighty-seven Italian restaurants in the neighbourhood which provided table-d'hôte dinners for the impecunious. The food was plentiful, especially the soup, which was a meal in itself; and they had always enjoyed themselves there. But if George could countenance the humble surroundings of Giuseppe's on his birthday, on the night they had been looking forward to for weeks as a grand occasion, then George must indeed have sunk low. For George to answer "Yes" was equivalent to an admission that he had feet of clay.

"THE MERE SIGHT OF THE FROCK SENT A SHUDDER THROUGH ROSIE."

"Yes," answered George. "That's just what I'd like."

Rosie put her finger in her mouth and bit it hard. It was the only way she could keep from crying.

Dinner was a miserable affair. The constraint between them was like a wall of fog. It was perhaps fortunate that they had decided to go to Giuseppe's, for there conversation is not essential. What with the clatter of cutlery, the babel of talk, the shrill cries of the Italian waitresses conveying instruction and reproof to an unseen cook, who replied with what sounded like a recitative passage from grand opera, and the deep gurgling of the soup-dispatchers, there is

"'I DON'T KNOW THAT I'M SO CRAZY TO HAVE DINNER HERE,' HE SAID, AWKWARDLY. 'HOW ABOUT GOING SOMEWHERE ELSE?'"

plenty of tumult to cover any lack of small-talk. Rosie, listening to the uproar, with the chair of the diner behind her joggling her back and the elbow of the diner beside her threatening her ribs, remembered with bitterness that George had called the McAstor a noisy, crowded place.

When the ice-cream and the demi-tasses appeared, Rosie leaned forward.

"Did you get tickets for a theatre?" she asked.

"No," said George. "I thought I'd wait and see what show you'd like to go to."

"I don't think I want to go to a show. I've a headache. I'll go home and rest."

"Good idea," said George. It was hopeless for him to try to keep the relief out of his voice. "I'm sorry you've a headache."

Rosie said nothing.

They parted at her door in strained silence. Rosie went wearily up to her room, and sat down on the accommodating piece of furniture which was a bed by night and which by day retired modestly into the wall and tried to look like a bookshelf. She had deceived George when she told him that she had a headache. Her head had never been clearer. Never had she been able to think so coherently and with such judicial intensity. She could see quite plainly now how mistaken she had been in George. She had been deceived by the glamour of the man. She did not blame herself for this. Any girl might have done the same. Even now, though her eyes were opened, she freely recognized his attractions. He was good-looking, an entertaining talker, and superficially kind and thoughtful. She was not to be blamed for having fancied herself in love with him; she ought to consider herself very lucky to have found him out before it was too late. She had been granted the chance of catching him off his guard, of scratching the veneer, and she felt thankful. At this point in her meditations Rosie burst into tears—due no doubt to relief.

The drawback to being a girl who seldom cries is that, when you do cry, you do it clumsily and without restraint. Rosie was sub-consciously aware that she was weeping a little noisily, but it was not till a voice spoke at her side that she discovered that she was rousing the house.

"For the love of Pete, honey, what ever is the matter?"

A stout, comfortably unkempt girl in a kimono was standing beside her. There was concern on her pleasant face.

"It's nothing," said Rosie. "I didn't mean to disturb you."

"Nothing! It sounded like a coupla families being murdered in cold blood. I'm in the room next to this, and I guess the walls are made of paper, for it sounded to me as if it was all happening on my own rug. Come along, honey. You tell me all about it. Maybe it's not true, anyway." She sat down beside Rosie on the bookcase-bed, and patted her shoulder in a comforting manner. Then she drew from the recesses of her kimono a packet of chewing-gum, a girl's best friend. "Have some?" Rosie shook her head. "Kind o' soothing, gum is," said the stout girl, inserting a slab in her mouth as if she were posting a letter, and beginning to champ rhythmically, like an amiable cow. "Now, what's your little trouble?"

"There's nothing to tell."

"Well, go ahead and tell it, then."

Rosie gave in to the impulse which urged her to confide. There was something undeniably appealing and maternal about this girl. In a few broken sentences she revealed the position of affairs. When she came to the part where George had refused to take her into the McAstor, the stout girl was so

moved that she swallowed her gum and had to take another slab.

The stout girl gave it as her opinion that George was a " wash-out."

" Of course," said Rosie, with a weak impulse to defend her late idol, " he's very particular about clothes."

The stout girl would hear of no defence. She said it was Bolsheviks like George that caused half the trouble in the world.

" Not," she said, eyeing Rosie critically, " but what that certainly is some little frock you've got on. I'll say so! Nobody couldn't look her best in that." She gave a sudden start. " Say, where did you get it ? "

" At Fuller and Benjamin's."

" My stars ! " cried the stout girl. " It *is !* I thought all along it looked kind o' familiar. Why, honey, that's the dress we girls call the Crown Prince, because it oughtn't to be at large. Why, it's a regular joke with us. I've tried to sell it a dozen times myself. What ? Sure I work at Fuller and Benjamin's. And, say, I remember you now. You came in just on closing-time, and Sadie Lewis waited on you. For the love o' Pete, why ever did you go and be so foolish as to let Sadie pass a thing like that on you ? "

" She looked so tired," said Rosie, miserably. " I just hated to bother her to show me a lot of dresses, so I took the first. It seemed such a shame. She looked all worn-out."

For the first time in her career as a chewer, a career that had covered two decades, the stout girl swallowed her gum twice in a single evening. Only the supremest emotion could have made her do this, for she was a girl who was careful of her chewing-gum, even to the extent of fastening it under the counter or behind doors for future use when it was not in active service. When she bought gum she bought the serial rights. But now, in the face of this extraordinary revelation, swallowing it seemed the only thing to do. She was stunned. A miracle had happened. With her own eyes she had seen a shopper who had consideration for shop-girls. Diogenes could not have been more surprised if he had found his honest man.

" Well, if that don't beat everything ! " she gasped. " Wherever did you get those funny ideas of yours about us sales-ladies being human ? Didn't you know we was just machines ? Now you listen here, honey. There's certainly something coming to you for that, and here's where you're going to get it. I've the cutest frock all tucked away down at the store, just ready and waiting for you. Honest, it's a bird. What's your size ? Why, it'll fit you just like mother made. I sold it this morning to a dame who went dippy over it."

" It's sold ? "

" Don't you worry about that. It hasn't been sent off yet. And I know the dame that got her hooks on to it. She's one of the Boomerang Sisters, the kind you send goods to and have 'em come whizzing back at you. She ain't worthy of that frock, honey, and she ain't going to get it. She'll get the Crown Prince instead, and be told that's what she ordered."

" But won't you get into trouble ? "

" There you go again, worrying yourself about the poor working girl ! Say, that habit's going to grow on you if you don't look out ! I won't get into no trouble. She'll let out a squawk you'll be able to hear for miles, I've no doubt ; but I sha'n't worry ! I'm quitting on the seventeenth. Going to be married ! " The stout girl sighed dreamily. " Say, *there's* a fellow that really is a fellow. Runs a dry-goods and notions store back home where I come from ; been crazy about me since we were kids, has a Ford car, coupla help, half-acre lot back of the house, twenty-eight chickens, and a bulldog that he's been offered fifty dollars for, and grows his own vegetables. I'm the lucky girl all right. Well, you look in at the store bright and early to-morrow morning, ask for me—Miss Merridew's my name—and I'll have that dress waiting for you. I'll say good night now. Got to write to my boy before I hit the hay. See you later ! "

George was dealing with a poetess in his suave manner when Rosie reached the office of the *Ladies' Sphere* at noon next day. In

" FOR THE LOVE OF PETE, HONEY, WHAT EVER IS THE MATTER ? "

"THIS WAS QUITE A DIFFERENT GEORGE. HIS EYES SHONE WITH PLEASURE AT THE SIGHT OF HER."

a few moments the poetess had receded like a brightly-coloured wave that rolls down the beach. The lift engulfed her, and she was no more. George came over to Rosie.

"Halloa, kiddie! Where did you spring from?"

This was quite a different George. His eyes shone with pleasure at the sight of her. His animation had returned. A very different George from the dull-eyed, disapproving critic of last night.

Rosie looked at him steadily, without an answering smile. She was a very different Rosie, also, from the stricken creature who had parted from him yesterday. The new frock was all and more than Miss Merridew had claimed for it. Navy blue, with short shoulders, tight sleeves, and wonderful lines, it was precisely the frock of which Rosie had dreamed. She felt decently clad at last. From the smart little straw hat with its flowers and fruit to the jaunty footwear, she was precisely all that a girl could wish to be. She could hold up her head again.

And she did hold up her head, with a militant tilt of the chin. She was feeling strong and resolute. Before she left the engagement would be broken. On that point she was as rigid as steel. If her outward appearance was all that George valued, she had done with him.

"I came to say something to you, George," she said, quietly.

George did not appear to have heard her. He looked about him. From behind doors came the click of typewriters and the sound of voices, but nobody was visible. They had the ante-room to themselves.

"Say! I got it!"

"Got it?"

"The rise, you know."

"Yes?"

He seemed not to notice the coolness of her voice. This man was full of his own petty triumph.

"I'll tell you one thing, though," he went on. "I don't know who Otis Elmer Banks is, but he's an ass. That dope of his may be all right with some people; but, when it comes to slipping one on Mr. Hebblethwaite, it's about as much good as a cold in the head. Yesterday afternoon I breezed into the boss's office, looked him in the eye as per schedule, and said I could do with a rise. According to the dope, he ought to have acted like a lamb. But all he did was to tell me to get out. I got out. The way I figured it was that, if I didn't get out then, I'd be getting out a little later for good."

A caller intruded, desirous of seeing the editor. George disposed of her. He returned to Rosie.

'Well, back I go to my chair out here, feeling good and sore, and presently a dame blows in and wants to see the boss. I tell her 'nothing doing.' 'You evidently don't know who I am,' she says, looking at me as if I was just one of the common people. 'I am Mrs. Hebblethwaite.' She had a book under her arm, and it looked to me like a sample. I wasn't taking any chances. 'Sorry, ma'am,' I says, 'but the last Mrs. Hebblethwaite that called here was a book-canvasser. So, unless you have an appointment, it's no go. I value my job, and I want to hold it.' 'I shall speak to my husband about your impertinence,' she said, and hooked it. I thought no more about it. And that night, while I was waiting for you in the McAstor lobby, I'm darned if the boss didn't come in with this same woman, and I heard her ask him if he'd remembered to put the cover over the canary's cage before they left home. Gee! By the time you arrived I'd made up my mind it would be the sack for me first thing this morning. I don't suppose you noticed anything, but I was feeling so sick I just wanted to creep away and die."

Rosie leaned bonelessly against the rail. The reaction from her militant mood had left her limp. The thought of how she had wronged her golden-hearted George filled her with self-loathing. She had no right to be engaged to marry the most perfect of his sex.

"Oh, George!" she gasped.

George misinterpreted her emotion. He patted her hand encouragingly.

"It's all right, kiddie! I told you there was a happy ending. This morning the boss sent for me. 'What's all this I hear about you refusing Mrs. Hebblethwaite admittance yesterday?' he said. I was feeling that all was over now except the tearful farewells. 'She told you who she was,' he said. What did you keep her out for?' 'I thought you were busy, Mr. Hebblethwaite,' I said. 'And it's always been my idea that, if callers hadn't appointments, you weren't to be disturbed on any account.' He didn't say anything for a bit, then he kind of glared at me. 'How many were there after the job when you got it?' I told him twenty-seven, counting me. 'Then let me tell you, young man,' he said, worrying his cigar, 'that I don't consider you one of twenty-seven. You're one in a million! You've a head! Weren't you boring me yesterday with some silly story about wanting a rise? What do you want a rise for?' 'Want to get married, sir.' He looked at me in a pitying sort of way. 'You don't know when you're well off,' he said. 'Oh, well! Give this to the cashier.' And he scribbled some-ing on a bit of paper, a note to the cashier r quite a decent rise. So there we are. y, I happened to be passing a shop a few ys ago, and I saw in the window some rniture that——"

Rosie gulped.

"But, George, why didn't you tell me?"

"Tell you? I have told you."

"Last night, I mean?"

George laughed a little sheepishly.

"Well, after the way I'd been blowing to ou about what a marvel I was, and what I as going to do to the boss when I got him one, I kind of felt you'd think me such a rned fool. Besides, I didn't want to orry you."

"But you did worry me. I nearly died."

George stared.

"Eh? How? Why?"

"Why. I naturally thought, when you ddenly didn't want to go into the McAstor, hat you were ashamed to be seen there with e."

'Ashamed to be seen with you! What ever ave you that idea?"

"I thought you thought my frock was too wful."

"What's the matter with your frock?" asked eorge, puzzled. "It looks all right to me."

"Not this one. The one I wore last night."

"Isn't that the one you wore last night?" said George.

Rosie blinked.

"You're the most wonderful man on earth."

"Sure. But don't tell anybody."

"But, all the same, you're pretty awful not to see that this is the cutest spring frock ever made."

George looked into her eyes. Otis Elmer Banks himself never directed into anybody's eyes such a steady, wholehearted gaze. Looking over his shoulder again, to make sure that their privacy was still undisturbed, he kissed Rosie.

"Anything you wear looks that way to me," he said. "Well, as I was saying, I was passing this shop, and there in the window was the swellest set of drawing-room furniture——"

"LOOKING OVER HIS SHOULDER AGAIN, TO MAKE SURE THAT THEIR PRIVACY WAS STILL UNDISTURBED, HE KISSED ROSIE."

The SULTAN at HOME

by *Walter B. Harris*

ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR FERRIER

Although it seems too impossibly funny to have happened, yet every word of this article is absolutely true!

IN 1912-13 the modern palace which the latest of the abdicated Sultans, Mulai Hafid, has built himself at Tangier, and which covers several acres of ground with its immense blocks of buildings and its courtyards, was still rising from the level of the soil, and His Majesty was temporarily housed, with all his retinue, in the old Kasbah at the top of the town. It is a spacious, uncomfortable, out-of-date and out-of-repair old castle, and it formed by no means a satisfactory place of residence, for it was not easy to install one hundred and sixty-eight people within its crumbling walls with any comfort or pleasure. When, too, it is taken into account that many of these one hundred and sixty-eight people were Royal Ladies, with royal prerogatives as to their apartments—to say nothing of their pretensions to the "most favoured ladies'" treatment—it can be realized that the solution was not easy. Even in the most luxurious of quarters the ladies of the palace are said to give considerable trouble, for jealousy is rife, and if one of them receives more attentions—personal or in presents—than the rest, there are often disturbing scenes, and rumour says that the "Arifas"—the elderly housekeepers charged with keeping order—not unseldom make use of the equivalent of the birch-rod—a knotted cord.

The Royal Ladies completely filled all the available accommodation in the Kasbah, and the Sultan was able to reserve for his private use only a couple of very shabby rooms over the entrance. Here he would, apologetically, receive his guests, until the purchase of the large garden in which he constructed his new palace furnished him with more convenient apartments, for there was a villa in the garden which had been erected by its former owner, a wealthy and respected Israelite who had for years filled the post of Belgian Vice-Consul. This villa, which still exists, is an astounding example of extraordinary taste—a pseudo-Moresque copy of a toy-house, over which plaster and paint of every colour had been poured in amazing profusion. Plaster lions guard its entrance, more like great diseased pug-dogs than the king of beasts, and to add to their attractions they were then painted all over with red spots. A scalloped archway crowned the front door, and the former owner

had once pointed out to the writer that each of the thirty-two scallops was painted a different colour—which was quite evident. Inside decoration had run riot in the wildest way. The ceilings dripped with plaster protuberances in reds and gold. Mouldings pursued their strange courses all over the parti-coloured walls, enclosing odd-shaped panels painted with views of lakes, and mountains, and impossible fishing-boats—designed and executed by some local genius. Chandeliers of coloured glass hung suspended from the ceilings, and the windows were fitted with panes of green and purple glass. The Sultan was in ecstasies, and furnished these astounding apartments with chairs and sofas covered in red plush, trimmed with blue and yellow fringes and studded with blue and yellow buttons. On the walls he hung promiscuously a score of clocks of all sizes and shapes; he littered tables with mechanical toys; he piled up musical boxes in every corner; he hung cages of canaries in every window; and adorned the chimney-piece with baskets of paper flowers—and then he sat down, happy, to enjoy civilization.

Amongst many mechanical toys which Mulai Hafid possessed was one which in its absurdity surpassed any toy I have ever seen. It was—or had been—a parrot, life-sized and seated on a high brass stand, which contained music. Moth and rust had corrupted, and there was little left of the gorgeous bird except a washleather body, the shape of an inflated sausage, with the two black bead eyes still more or less in place, and a crooked and paralyzed-looking beak. The legs had given way and the cushion of a body had sunk depressedly on to the brass perch. One long red tail-feather shot out at an angle, and round its neck and sparsely distributed over its body were the remains of other plumes, of which little but the quills remained. On either side were the foundations of what had once been its wings, consisting of mechanical appliances in wood and wire. Anything more pitiful than this relic of parrotry could not be imagined.

Every now and then, apparently for no reason, this strange toy came to life. The sausage-like body wriggled, the broken beak opened, the tail-feather shot out at a new angle, and the framework of the wings extended itself and closed again with a click, and then, after a mighty effort, which gave one the impression that the ghost of a bird was going to be seasick, the whistling pipes concealed in the brass stand began to play. The music was on a par with the bird—notes were missing and the whole scale had sunk or risen into tones and semitones of unimaginable composition. To recognize the tune was an impossibility, but the thrill of the performance was undeniable. It seemed as though there was a race between the bird and the pipes to reach a climax first. Both grew more and more excited, until suddenly there was a long wheeze and longer chromatic scale

"HIS MAJESTY WAS TEMPORARILY HOUSED IN THE OLD KASBAH—A SPACIOUS, UNCOMFORTABLE, OUT-OF-DATE AND OUT-OF-REPAIR OLD CASTLE."

"THEN BREAKFAST WOULD ARRIVE, CARRIED DOWN FROM THE KASBAH ON THE HEADS OF BLACK SLAVES, WITH TEA AND COFFEE ON IMMENSE SILVER TRAYS."

from high to low, and, with an appealing shake of its palsied head, the parrot collapsed once more into its state of petrified despair.

The Sultan was completely content. He realized that at last, after the sombre pomp of the palace at Fez, he had settled down to modern life and refinement, and had attained "taste." It was his custom to arrive early in the morning and spend his days there, riding down from the Kasbah on a fat saddle-mule caparisoned in purple or pale blue or yellow, accompanied by men on horseback and with his black slaves running beside him. Two old women, one a Negress, the other a white Berber woman, nearly always accompanied him, poised upon fine saddle-mules, and closely veiled. The Negress was his old nurse; the Berber woman a soothsayer. Arrived in the garden, the usual series of mishaps began. One of his old ladies would fall off her frisky mule; or the key of the empty house was lost, and an entry had to be made by forcing a window after everyone had fussed about pretending to look for the key for half an hour or so. Then a carpenter would be sent for to mend the broken window, and a slave would suddenly remember that for fear of losing the key he had tied it round his neck on a string, where it still hung heavily on his chest. Then breakfast would arrive, carried down from the Kasbah on the heads of black slaves—great trays of fresh bread, bowls of milk, sodden half-warm cakes smothered in butter and honey, excellent native crumpets, and a host of dishes of fruits and pastry and sweets, and tea and coffee on immense silver trays. It was a sort of promiscuous meal, partaken of first of all by the Sultan and his particular friends, then passed on to the "courtiers," and finally handed out of the windows to the slaves, gardeners, and retainers, who completely finished what was left, however great the quantity.

By this time the workmen had begun building operations on the great palace a hundred yards or so away, and the ex-Sultan would visit the site, taking a very intelligent interest in every detail. Then back to the villa, where native visitors would be received, and literary and religious questions discussed. Mulai Hafid himself is no mean author, and his Arabic verses would, if published at that time, have gained him much praise and many enemies. To-day there is no reason to remain silent. Circumstances have changed. Was it not he who wrote of Tangier:—

> In the last day the people of Tangier came to the judgment-seat of God, and the Supreme Judge said, "Surely you are the least and worst of all people. Under what circumstances did you live?"
>
> And they replied, "We have sinned. We have sinned; but our Government was International—we were ruled by the Representatives of Europe."
>
> And the Supreme Judge said, "Surely you have been sufficiently punished. Enter into Paradise."

By anyone who knew and experienced the international government of Tangier, these verses cannot fail to be appreciated.

Did he not also write the following in his days of contention with the French Government?

> "Is not the wisdom of God manifest?
> Has He not given intelligence even to the dog?
> A little less, it is true, than to the elephant,
> But a little more than he bestowed upon the French Administration."

When Mulai Hafid purchased the property of Ravensrock, at Tangier, which had for many years been the country residence of the late Sir John Drummond Hay, he began at once to fell the beautiful trees for which the place was famous. Most people of Arab race have a dislike for trees, which is no doubt one of the reasons why Morocco is so treeless. One after the other the great pines and eucalyptuses disappeared, but though numbers of men were employed the work did not progress fast enough to satisfy his ex-Majesty.

One day someone proposed to him that dynamite would do the work more quickly, so he promptly dispatched one of the workmen to town to buy dynamite cartridges from the Spanish fishermen, who used them for killing fish at sea. I was with the ex-Sultan when the messenger returned. He stood before us, and turning the hood of his jelab inside out, let fall on the ground at our feet a couple of dozen of these highly-explosive cartridges. Fortunately none exploded. A few minutes later the work had begun. Holes were quickly drilled in the trees near the roots and the cartridges placed in position. Fuses were lit, and one saw scurrying groups of men bolting out of reach. Then there was a crash, and some giant of the mountain came crumbling down to earth, to the intense delight of Mulai Hafid. It was reckless destruction of what had taken years of care and attention to create, but nothing would persuade the ex-Sultan to allow these beautiful woods to remain. By dint of very special pleading a few of the finest trees were spared, but only a few. This wholesale destruction was carried out principally because Mulai Hafid feared assassination, and wished to eliminate from his surroundings any covert in which the would-be assassin could conceal himself.

The ex-Sultan took assiduously to bridge, and played whenever he got the chance. One of these chances was with his dentist. His relations with his own particular Spanish dentist having been very strained on the question of the price of a live lion, he was forced to apply elsewhere for such dental repairs as he required from time to time—and fortune favoured him, for he discovered an excellent American dentist, who had lately arrived. A close friendship sprang up between the ex-Sultan and the dentist, and, as often as not, bridge took the place of dentistry. The American would arrive with his timid lady assistant and all his implements of torture, only to be invited to sit down at the table and play cards. The lady-assistant was very young and very shy, and was more accustomed to play children's card games than bridge. A fourth player would be found and the ill-assorted party completed. The ex-Sultan enjoyed himself immensely. He generally won, perhaps a little by never permitting the trembling lady-assistant to be his partner. In this manner the whole afternoon would be passed, and Mulai Hafid in the evening would show the few francs he had won, with great joy. The points were one franc a hundred, so no very serious damage could be done; but rich as the Sultan was, he rejoiced more in his humble winnings at bridge than over his many thousands in the banks. Not a little of his enjoyment was owing to the fact that he felt that he was "doing" the dentist. "He comes," the ex-Sultan would say, "to mend my teeth and to take my gold, and in the end I win his francs." Weeks went by. Now and again there was an afternoon for real dentistry, but there were many more for bridge—and every time the Sultan won. But one day the climax came. The teeth were excellently repaired—the work was of the best—there was no more to be done but to pay the bill—and the bill very naturally and rightly included all the bridge hours, at so much per hour. It was the most expensive bridge Mulai Hafid ever played.

The ex-Sultan's bridge was peculiar.

"A CLOSE FRIENDSHIP SPRANG UP BETWEEN THE EX-SULTAN AND THE DENTIST, AND, AS OFTEN AS NOT, BRIDGE TOOK THE PLACE OF DENTISTRY."

"IN THE KITCHEN THE SULTAN'S AUGUST PRESENCE SOMEWHAT UPSET THE TRANQUILLITY OF MY NATIVE COOKS AND SERVANTS."

It would not for a moment be hinted that the irregularities that occurred in the game were due to anything but accident, but these little accidents were very frequent. The ex-Sultan, who all his life had been accustomed to sit cross-legged on a divan, soon tired of sitting upright on a chair. He would become restless and tuck his legs underneath him. Now, ordinary chairs are not intended to be sat in cross-legged, especially by bulky people, and as generally an armchair had been placed for H.M. to sit in, he would constantly be changing his position and wriggling to make himself more comfortable and to find more room for his capacious legs. These wriggles occasioned at times a decided movement to right or left, and if the players did not hold up their cards—well, it was their own fault. Sometimes he would drop his own cards, and his long sleeve at the same time would sweep the tricks already won on to the floor, and there was confusion in sorting them. Once or twice an ace unexpectedly appeared for the second time in the game, picked up by accident from the floor, no doubt; and as to revokes—but with a plaintive voice the Sultan would say, "I am only a beginner." When he won he was in the highest spirits; when he lost he sulked—but he didn't very often lose.

It is a characteristic of the Moors that they hate to lose a game, no matter what they are playing. I have seen the most exciting games of chess, skilfully but quickly played, where the loser has insisted on going on playing game after game till sometimes in pure desperation his adversary allowed him to win. Mulai Abdul Aziz, Mulai Hafid's predecessor on the throne, had a unique manner of scoring at cricket. When he was Sultan we used to play cricket in the palace at Fez, generally four on each side. The score was carefully kept, but no names were entered. When the game was finished the Sultan himself placed the names against the scores—always, of course, putting his own in front of the largest. Then the name of the player he liked best on that particular afternoon had the second best score, and so on, the lowest being reserved for the person most out of favour. The score-book was religiously kept, and often referred to by the Sultan, who would say, "That was a great afternoon! I made sixty-one runs and Harris made forty-eight. X. played abominably and only made two." While as a matter of fact H.M. himself had made two, and Harris perhaps none, while the unfortunate man who was down in the book as having scored two was probably the excellent batsman who had made the sixty-one that the Sultan claimed. If one is an autocratic monarch one can do anything—even poach your neighbour's cricketing score.

I remember well the first game of bridge I ever played with Mulai Abdul Aziz. It was in my own house after a dinner—the first European dinner the Sultan ever attended. There were present the British and French Ministers and the staffs of the two Legations. It was all rather formal. The Sultan sat at the head of the table and ate very little; he was then not at ease with knives and forks. After dinner we sat down to bridge. The Sultan and the late Sir Reginald Lister, who then represented Great Britain in Morocco, played against a member of the staff of the French Legation and myself. We cut for deal and I drew the lowest card. The Sultan was seated on my left. I dealt and declared "hearts." "I can't play hearts," burst out His Majesty, petulantly, "I haven't got any. You must give me your cards"—and I was obliged to pass him over the excellent "heart" hand on which I had declared in exchange for his barren thirteen cards, containing only one small trump. But "hearts" we had to play and played, and my partner and I went down five tricks, much to the Sultan's delight. Luckily we were not playing for money.

That was not the only amusing episode that happened at that dinner. There had been a long diplomatic discussion as to the etiquette to be observed with the ex-Sultan, as this first European dinner he had ever attended would form a precedent. It was decided that the guests should arrive at my house punctually at eight, and the Sultan at eight-fifteen. I was to meet the Sultan at the door and conduct him into the drawing-room, where I was to present to him the Ministers of Great Britain and France, who, in turn, would present their suites. This was all very well on paper, but Mulai Abdul Aziz, taking an intelligent interest in dinner-parties, thought he would like to see what went on before the guests came, and instead of arriving

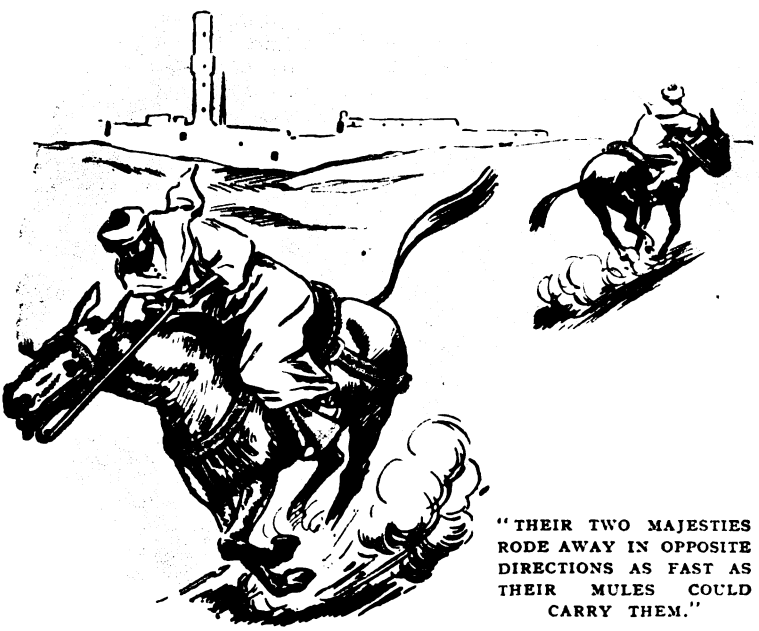
at eight-fifteen he came at five in the afternoon. He apologized for being a little before the time, and expressed his desire to see the preparations. Two minutes later he was in the kitchen, where his august and highly saintly presence—for he was a direct descendant of the Prophet and to his countrymen "The Commander of the Faithful"—somewhat upset the tranquillity of my native cooks and servants. But ovens had to be opened and saucepans uncovered, spoons introduced into them and the contents exhibited; the ice-machine to be thoroughly explained, and a thousand and one questions answered. Then the pantry occupied for some time His Majesty's attention. Nor was he less interested in the floral decorations of the table and the distribution of the plate. While I dressed for dinner he sat and talked to my native servants, the Sultan never losing his dignity nor my men their respect, and all concerned were completely at their ease. The Moor has nearly always the perfect manners of a gentleman, no matter what his position, and the sentiment of the country is essentially democratic. It was a common incident at the many dinners I have since given for the two ex-Sultans, that they would appeal to the men who served the table for confirmation of some statement, or for the generally-accepted opinion of the Moorish people on some subject under discussion.

At eight o'clock the guests arrived, and Mulai Abdul Aziz, being already in the house, instead of arriving at eight-fifteen as by the programme he should have done, had to be concealed in a room upstairs. Punctually at a quarter past eight he descended the stairs, crossed the hall, and entered the drawing-room. He was dressed in his fine long white flowing garments, and all my guests expressed to me afterwards their appreciation of his dignity and carriage, as he made his formal entry and during the presentation of the guests. Nor were they less struck by the undoubted charm of his manners, the gentleness of his voice, and his intelligence, which render Mulai Abdul Aziz perhaps the most attractive figure in Morocco of to-day.

When the moment arrived for the ex-Sultan to take his departure, he called me aside and said that he had a kitchen-range in his palace, but had never used it. He was pleased to say that the excellence of my dinner had convinced him that his own range must be set to work at once—and had I a sack of coal, as he had none, for in his kitchens only wood and charcoal were burned. In a few minutes my servants, in their smartest liveries, were filling a sack with coal in the back premises. When it was ready the Sultan left. The guests rose to their feet, the Sultan shook hands with them all, and I conducted him to the door. A magnificently caparisoned riding-mule awaited him, and mounted slaves were at the gate. On a second mule was an officer of his household, beautifully dressed in white clothes, struggling to balance across the front of his crimson saddle the almost bursting sack of coal!

It was always my great desire to bring about a reconciliation between the two ex-Sultans, Mulai Abdul Aziz and Mulai Hafid, but I never succeeded. Mulai Hafid had driven his brother Mulai Abdul Aziz from the throne, and naturally his brother had no reason to be grateful to him. At the same time, Mulai Hafid always blamed Mulai Abdul Aziz for having ruined Morocco, and of having sown the seed of the loss of Moroccan independence. There was also the question of etiquette—they naturally could not meet at all owing to the question of precedence. Mulai Abdul Aziz had been Sultan *first*, and claimed the first place. Mulai Hafid equally claimed it because he had been Sultan *last*. After many unsuccessful endeavours I persuaded both to agree that if they met by chance on the road they would salute each other and embrace. For months they did not meet, but one day, turning a sudden corner, their riding-mules collided. So taken aback were their two Majesties that they entirely forgot their agreement, and rode away in opposite directions as fast as their mules could carry them.

Immediately after the reconciliation—if such it could be called—between Mulai Hafid and the French authorities, the ex-Sultan gave a dinner-party to the members of the French Legation



"THEIR TWO MAJESTIES RODE AWAY IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS AS FAST AS THEIR MULES COULD CARRY THEM."

and a number of other French officials, in a charming villa he had meanwhile taken on the Marshan, at Tangier. Not sure of whom he ought to invite to this solemn repast, Mulai Hafid had left the choice of his guests to the French Chargé d'Affaires, who had sent in a list. The hour of dinner arrived, and so did the guests, amongst whom was the very capable and excellent *Commissaire* of the French local police, whom H.M. had not yet met. The presentations took place, and the Sultan called me aside—I was in attendance—and asked who certain of the guests, whom he did not know by sight, were. When I informed him that one of them was the French *Commissaire de police* he became a little uneasy and a shadow passed over his face. "What do you think he has come for?" asked the ex-Sultan, nervously.

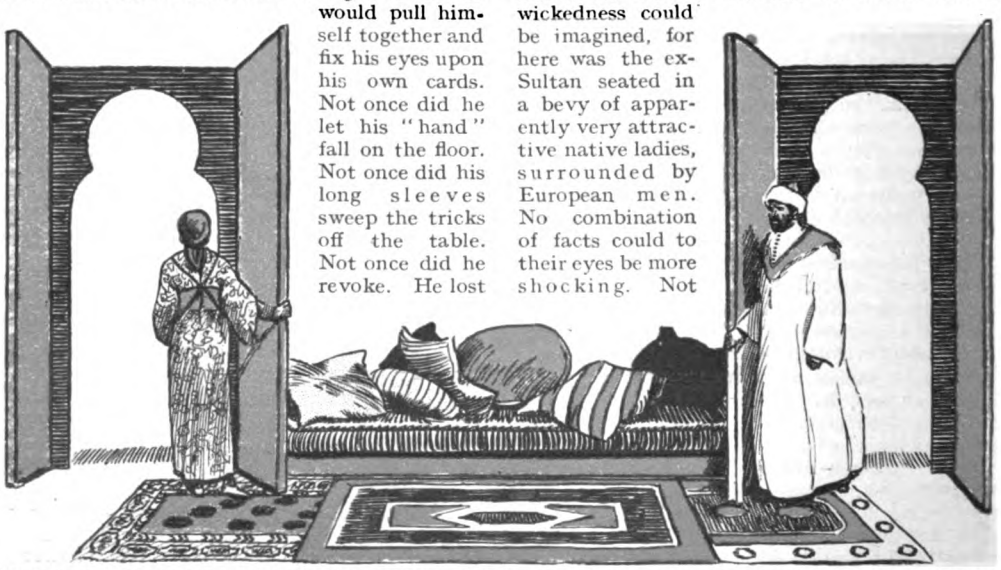
Seeing an opportunity for a joke at H.M.'s expense, I hesitated a moment, and then, with many apologies, informed the Sultan that there had been stories current about his manner of playing bridge. No one, I said, believed them, but naturally the French authorities were most desirous that there should be an end to this false rumour, and had therefore decided, very privately, of course, to bring the *Commissaire de police* to watch his play on that particular evening. As soon as they were assured that H.M.'s play was above all suspicion an official *démenti* could be given to these disturbing rumours. Mulai Hafid's face wore a look of unusual gravity during the long and sumptuous dinner.

After the guests had adjourned to the drawing-room we sat down to bridge. The *Commissaire*, who was not a player, was purposely invited, without the Sultan's knowledge, to seat himself at Mulai Hafid's side. The game began. H.M. was terribly nervous. Every time he wriggled in his chair and leant either to right or left he would pull himself together and fix his eyes upon his own cards. Not once did he let his "hand" fall on the floor. Not once did his long sleeves sweep the tricks off the table. Not once did he revoke. He lost game after game, and his distress became painfully manifest.

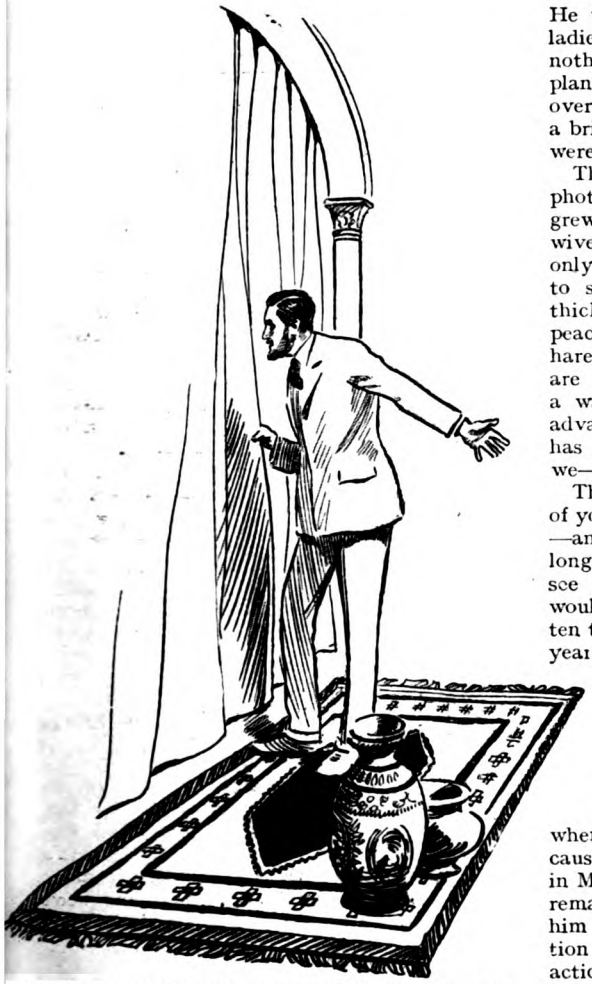
Between two deals a guest approached, and politely asked, "Is your Majesty winning?" "Winning!" cried the now thoroughly upset monarch. "Winning! How can I possibly win with this horror of a policeman watching every card I play?"—and the writer had to explain to the assembled company the whole plot.

Mulai Hafid was an excellent host, and was never happier than when entertaining. His dinners were well served and always amusing, and his guests, European and native, suitably chosen. On one occasion some charming and aristocratic French ladies were visiting Morocco. Amongst a series of *fêtes* given by the Diplomatic Corps and others, for their entertainment, was a banquet at the residence of the Moorish ex-Minister of War, Sir Mehdi el-Menebhi, G.C.M.G. At this banquet the ex-Sultan presided. The distinguished lady-guests had been purchasing Moorish costumes, and it was arranged that they should come to this feast arrayed in all their recently-acquired magnificence. The result was charming—so charming that it was decided to send for a photographer and have the group photographed. On his arrival the guests were posed—Mulai Hafid seated on a cushioned divan surrounded by the ladies in their Moorish dresses. The men stood behind.

The photograph was a great success, but its indirect results almost a tragedy, for Mulai Hafid placed a large copy of the group on the mantelpiece of the drawing-room of his villa. The ladies of his household never left the Kasbah, but on one occasion he sent an old Berber lady and an aged slave, who had been his nurse, to visit the villa, and the eagle eyes of this venerable dame discovered the photograph. In their minds no clearer evidence of Mulai Hafid's wickedness could be imagined, for here was the ex-Sultan seated in a bevy of apparently very attractive native ladies, surrounded by European men. No combination of facts could to their eyes be more shocking. Not



"SEEKING THE APARTMENTS OF ONE OF THE ROYAL LADIES, THE SULTAN HAD THE MORTIFICATION TO SEE HER GO OUT OF ONE DOOR AS HE ENTERED BY THE OTHER."



"IT WAS ONLY WHEN THE WRITER WAS CALLED IN AND EXPLAINED TO SOME INVISIBLE PERSONS, CONCEALED BEHIND A THICK CURTAIN DRAWN ACROSS AN ARCHWAY, THAT PEACE AND CALM WERE RESTORED IN THE HAREM."

only was it clear that Mulai Hafid had been enjoying the society of ladies other than his wives, but he had even not hesitated to do so in the presence of "Christian" men. So the photograph, concealed in their voluminous raiment, was taken to the Kasbah, where it was presented to the gaze of the Sultan's outraged wives. Mulai Hafid was out hunting that day, and it was he himself who recounted to the writer what occurred on his return. None of his ladies were in the courtyard to meet him; no one except a slave or two was visible. Not a word of welcome, not a question as to the sport he had enjoyed! Seeking the apartments of one of the Royal Ladies, the Sultan had the mortification to see her go out of one door as he entered by the other. He called to her, but she paid no attention. He sought consolation elsewhere, with no better results. He was shunned and in exile—not one of the ladies would speak to him. He knew, of course, nothing of the reason, and could obtain no explanation. He slept in his little reception-room over the entrance of the Kasbah, and hoped for a brighter situation in the morning, but things were no better.

Then the two old women who had found the photograph and given it to the Sultan's ladies grew alarmed and confessed, but the many wives were difficult to convince, and it was only when the writer was called in and explained to some invisible persons, concealed behind a thick curtain drawn across an archway, that peace and calm were restored in the Shereefian harem. As the Sultan said afterwards, "There are some institutions in Europe which are in a way preferable to ours. Monogamy has its advantage. When a man ever quarrels he has only one wife to quarrel with—whereas we——!"

The ex-Sultan had a very numerous family of young children, to whom he was really devoted—and with some of whom he would play for long hours together. I sometimes was taken to see them in a garden in the Kasbah. There would be a few black slave women and from ten to twenty children—all probably under seven years of age and varying in colour from very dark to very fair. Once I mentioned to Mulai Hafid that they seemed to be many. He laughed and replied that they were not all there; none of the younger ones were present; and that in all there were twenty-six under six or seven years of age. In 1914 he went to Spain, where his relations with the German Embassy caused him to be suspected of instigating intrigues in Morocco. His pension was cancelled, and he remains to-day an exile. Anyone who has known him in his family life, and witnessed his devotion to his children, cannot help desiring, if his actions in Spain have not been more than follies, that he may be permitted once more to return to his home.

"THE EX-SULTAN HAD A VERY NUMEROUS FAMILY OF YOUNG CHILDREN, TO WHOM HE WAS REALLY DEVOTED."

The Breaking-Point

by

F. ANSTEY

Illustrated by G. H. EVISON

RICHARD ALSTON, late first lieutenant in the West Marlshires, was walking home from Hampstead on a night in mid-December, 1918, with a lighter heart than he had known for the last three years, than he had ever hoped would be his again. Even now he could scarcely believe that anything so wonderful had happened as that he was engaged to Cynthia Royle.

His thoughts went back to his first meeting with her. She and her mother had come to see him in the private hospital for officers to which he had been taken. All they knew of him then was that he was in the same regiment as Cynthia's brother Nugent, and that he had been severely wounded in a reconnaissance they had been ordered to make together, in which Royle had been killed. Alston remembered how he had shrunk from seeing them; they would want to talk to him about the son and brother they had lost—and he hated thinking of anybody or anything connected with the war.

But they had understood all that, and spoken no more of Royle than was unavoidable. And Cynthia had been so fair and sweet that he could have wished she had never come, since it was not to be expected that hers was more than a duty-visit which would be her only one. There he had misjudged her; she had come to see him regularly during his long convalescence, and each time she had left him with a bitterer sense that it was only her interest in him as her brother's friend that brought her there at all.

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As a matter of fact, Royle and he had not been on any intimate terms. Royle had been in the Service before the war, and was his senior in rank as well as age. Alston had always had an uneasy impression that the other rather tolerated than liked him, while he himself admired and looked up to Royle and would have been proud to be admitted to his friendship.

However, there was no need to tell Cynthia that, and at least he could praise him to her without insincerity. He thought of the day when he had received his Military Cross at Buckingham Palace; Nugent's cross had been given to his mother the same day, and Alston was invited for the first time to the house at Hampstead. They had asked him often since that, and Cynthia had always seemed glad to see him, though there were times when he had felt it would be wiser if he went there no more.

It was not till this evening that he had had any hope that she felt more than friendship for him, and on that hope he had spoken, because he could not help himself, though he knew he was risking all by speaking so soon.

He had risked everything, and won. Fortune, not for the first time, had shown him favour when he least expected it. For, on the whole, his luck had been amazing. If he had been told, when, three years ago, he had at last decided to apply for a commission, that he would come through the war, not only without mutilation or disfigurement, but actually with distinction, it would have seemed incredible enough. Yet here he was, safe and free, released by his last Board from all further soldiering, able to return whenever he chose to the literary work in which, before the war, he had begun to make a name. He had felt too slack to take up writing again as yet. Now he would set to work for Cynthia's sake and do something worthy of her.

What a long way he had come without noticing; he was nearly at the end of Finchley Road already! It was amusing now to remember that not very long ago, as he had walked down that broad and commonplace thoroughfare, illuminated along its centre by cones of dim light, with its prim two-storeyed houses standing back behind their walled gardens, he had had a vague fear as of something hostile that was following with a kind of stealthy rustle. He had been afraid to turn his head lest he should see—what, he did not know precisely. It showed how shaken his nerves must have been, for now, though he heard the rustling again, he knew perfectly well what was causing it—simply a few fallen leaves drifting in the night-breeze.

And yet—there were none on the pavement in front of him. The trees along the kerbstone were bare now—most of their leaves must have been swept away or trodden into the mire by this time. It was strange, but that former sensation of being pursued by something subtly malevolent had begun to return. Alston quickened his pace, but without escaping from the sound. It was not until he was in Wellington Road, where the lamps were on the side-path and gave a stronger light, that he could bring himself to stop and look back.

And then he laughed aloud at his own folly, as he saw what had been scaring him. It was nothing but a piece of paper, which naturally made a scraping sound as it moved; he could still hear it after he had turned down Grove End Road, but it no longer gave him any uneasiness. He turned another corner, at right angles this time, into St. John's Wood Road, and now, as the rustle continued to follow him, he became uneasy once more. It was hardly possible that—but when he looked back again he was relieved to see that it was only the same crumpled paper—or, more probably, another—which had been caught by a cross-gust and carried after him. As he stood there, it was borne on till it stopped at his feet, and, seized by a sudden curiosity of which he was slightly ashamed, he picked it up and unfolded it.

There was a nearly full moon sailing through a ragged gap edged with faint orange in a sky of greenish black, but it was not bright enough to tell him more than that there was writing of some sort on the paper. He had to take it under the next street-lamp before he could read the words. After reading them he crushed the paper into a ball and flung it away as though it had stung him—as indeed it had.

The words he had read were these: "*I forbid you to see her again. You know why.*"

Only one person could have

the right or the knowledge to have written thus to him. And that person was dead.

Alston walked on, shaken to his soul. He could not help looking over his shoulder once, but the ball of paper lay where he had thrown it, as if its mission were fulfilled. He was trembling still when he let himself into his flat in some Maida Vale mansions, but, once back in his comfortable study and able to think calmly, he soon saw how absurdly he had exaggerated what might be, after all, a mere coincidence.

So far as he recollected, the handwriting was unknown to him. Why should the message not have been meant for another? Or, more probable still, it might have been a rough note for a line in a novel or play which some author had, as he himself had often done, hastily jotted down on the first available scrap of paper—and lost or thrown away. It was ridiculous to have been so upset by such a trifle—especially when he had everything now to make him happy. He would be a fool if he allowed himself to be seriously worried by a purely imaginary trouble.

And when he awoke the next morning, after a dreamless night, every trace of trouble or worry had disappeared, and all he thought of was how to get through the hours that must pass before he was to see Cynthia again. He got through them agreeably enough by revising the opening chapters of the novel he had left unfinished, and finding that his lost enthusiasm and confidence had come back to him.

It had been arranged over-night that he was to call for Cynthia that afternoon at a depôt in Kensington Square, where she was working for wounded soldiers. For the greater part of the war she had been a V.A.D. at a hospital, but had been compelled to give this up, and lighter and more occasional duties were all that she had since been allowed to undertake.

Alston was a little before his time, and was standing outside the old William and Mary houses in the gathering dusk, waiting for Cynthia to join him, when he saw something which revived the terror of the previous night. In itself it was nothing—just a crumpled piece of paper like the other, which was swerving across the road from the Square railings. Was he mistaken, or was it really making slowly toward him? He watched it spellbound, till presently it came within his reach, and at first he did not dare to touch it.

But he must, he knew, get the mastery of his nerves—or they would master him. It was a million to one that this paper was either blank or bore nothing of the least significance; he had only to satisfy himself of that to set his mind at rest for ever, and with this expectation he picked up the paper. Like the previous one, it had been written upon, and he could scarcely believe his own eyes as he read the lines: "*You have been warned once. You are unworthy of her and must give her up. —N. R.*"

He was still unable to identify the handwriting, but the words, to say nothing of the initials, confirmed his wildest fears. This at least could be no mere coincidence. Nugent Royle was dead beyond all doubt—but his spirit survived. It had been striving, longer than he knew perhaps, to establish communication with him. Now it had succeeded, and he would never be free again from this sinister and implacable persecution! The horror of it stunned him for the moment. Then he tore the paper into shreds, and, just as he had done so, saw Cynthia coming smiling down the steps. "Have I kept you waiting very long, Dick?" she had begun, and then, as she saw his face, her smile vanished. "Tell me," she asked, anxiously. "You're not in any pain again, dearest? I'd been hoping all that was over."

Alston said that he had had a slight return of it—nothing to speak of—he was all right again now.

"You poor old thing!" she said, affectionately. "You've been overtiring yourself. It's time you had *somebody* to take care of you—but you've got *me* now."

He was ordered to take her to tea at a shop she knew of close by, and was thankful that her animated description of her experiences during the day relieved him from all efforts of his own. But Cynthia had set herself to distract his thoughts from the pain he was evidently suffering, and was not so exacting as to expect him to entertain her just then.

There was something restful and almost homelike about the room they were in, with its subdued light, pleasant wallpaper, and pretty china. Alston, as he sat with Cynthia at one of the little tiled tables, near a glowing fire, gradually yielded to the sense of well-being and security. He felt he was somehow in sanctuary—his invisible enemy would not assail him so long as he was with Cynthia.

And as he grew more collected he began to see that he might have taken too serious a view of his position. Those messages were directed to him, and to him alone. If their inspirer had had the power to do more, surely it would have been used before now.

As for himself, he had a very obvious protection; he had merely to refrain from reading any further messages of this kind, and they could disturb him no more.

And at that his spirits rose, till, to Cynthia's delight, and rather to his own surprise, he was able to talk and laugh as gaily as though no malign influence had ever threatened his happiness.

On leaving the tea-shop he would have taken a taxi if he could have found one, but, none being available, they travelled to Hampstead by the District and Tube. A fitful wind was blowing as they mounted Holly Hill, and again there was that ominous rustle behind him, but, well as he knew what was dogging his footsteps, he steeled himself to bear it. So long as Cynthia noticed nothing unusual, he thought, he was safe enough. But his nerves were on the rack nevertheless, and he was less and less conscious of what he was saying.

"'FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, DON'T TOUCH IT, CYNTHIA, DON'T TOUCH IT!' HE CRIED, LOSING ALL SELF-CONTROL AS HE STAMPED THE PAPER INTO THE EARTH UNDER HIS HEEL."

They had come to more open ground facing the terrace of stately old houses, one of which was Cynthia's home, when a sudden blast whirled something above their heads and deposited it on the road before her feet—a sheet of paper which glided slowly on in advance, and stopped occasionally, in a manner that could not fail to attract her attention.

Yes, this time the message was to her, not him; if she read it, all was over! "For Heaven's sake, don't touch it, Cynthia, don't touch it!" he cried, losing all self-control as he stamped the paper into the earth under his heel.

"*Dick!*" she exclaimed, and laughed. "As if I was *dreaming* of touching it! What *are* you so afraid of? Not infection, surely?"

Even as the words passed his lips he had seen the folly of them. He could hardly have said or done anything more certain to excite her curiosity.

"There—there's always a risk," he said, determined to guard against it yet, if possible. "Don't think me fussy, darling, but I want you to promise me faithfully never to pick up any stray piece of paper that may come in your way. You *will* promise me that, won't you?"

"If it will relieve your mind," she said, "I promise faithfully that I'll never touch the dirtiest scrap of paper I see in the street, however much I'm tempted. There—are you satisfied *now?*"

"Yes," he said. "I know you'll keep your word." And he was satisfied, for, if she was a little astonished, it was evident that she suspected nothing. Yes, on the whole, it was better that this should have happened, or he might not have thought of exacting that promise from her.

At dinner that evening Mrs. Royle, attached as she was to Alston, saw nothing unusual in his manner. Cynthia was not quite happy about him, however, though she was careful not to let him see it. When they were alone together afterwards she led him to talk about his work, and he told her of the novel, of an idea he had for a comedy, and other projects, but it struck her that, for the time at all events, he had lost something of his belief and interest in them.

She was neither anxious nor alarmed—her hospital experience was sufficient to prevent that—but she could see that he was farther from complete recovery than she had been hoping. It was no wonder, she thought, if his poor nerves were still all ajar after the horrors he had been through. He must be induced to forget them; she would give up her work at the depôt and devote herself entirely to him. So, before they parted, she represented that she was longing to see a play again, and persuaded him to try to get seats for a *matinée* of one of them next day. He was to let her know on the telephone if he succeeded, and she would come up and meet him at the theatre.

The wind had gone down when Alston left the house, and though both on his way down the hill to the station and along St. John's Wood Road his ears were alert to catch the rustle he dreaded, he heard nothing. Might it not be that he never would hear it again—that his tormentor had shot his last bolt and could no longer molest him? He began to feel reassured.

Nor did anything happen to destroy this feeling all the next morning, most of which was occupied in making a round of the principal box-offices before he could get seats for one of the plays Cynthia had named. Then he had to ring her up and tell her the theatre and time at which they were to meet, and the rest of the time he passed at his club, which he had not visited since he had left for the Front. At the club he was glad to come across some old friends and find that they had not forgotten him; he lunched with them, but from some half-superstitious instinct did not mention his engagement to Cynthia. And then he went on to the theatre, and waited for her in the lobby.

He had not to wait long; the curtain had not risen when they were shown to their seats—and then the next blow fell and found Alston utterly unprepared.

He had broken the seal that fastened his programme and was about to pass it to Cynthia, when written across the two pages he saw the words: "*If she could know what you are she would have no more to do with you.—N. R.*"

And at the same instant, before he could do anything to prevent it, she had taken the programme from his hand. But what could he have done?

When she had seen those terrible words, what would she think, what would be her next words to him? He dared not look at her as she read them; he sat rigid, setting his jaw hard, his eyes fixed on the drop-curtain a few yards in front, for what seemed an age, until she spoke.

And when she did, it was only to make a casual remark about the cast. He was saved; the words that had burnt into his brain were mercifully invisible to her, and, indeed, when he found courage to glance at the page again they were no longer there.

How near he had been to betraying himself by some mad appeal! Even now, if she saw his face, she might—but fortunately the curtain had already risen; he could recover his self-command unobserved.

And as his mind cleared he recognized that in what had just happened there was something rather encouraging than otherwise. For since these denunciations seemed to be visible to none but himself, they lost most of their terror; they would always be galling reminders of what he had hoped to forget, but never again would he let himself be outwardly affected by them. If he did he would surely end by alarming and estranging Cynthia—that was the only way in which he could possibly lose her.

He had been unconscious till then of everything on the stage, but now he was able to give his attention to the play, and even laugh without an effort; so that Cynthia congratulated herself on the success of her treatment. She

"HE HAD BROKEN THE SEAL THAT FASTENED HIS PROGRAMME AND WAS ABOUT TO PASS IT TO CYNTHIA, WHEN WRITTEN ACROSS THE TWO PAGES HE SAW THE WORDS: 'IF SHE COULD KNOW WHAT YOU ARE SHE WOULD HAVE NO MORE TO DO WITH YOU.—N.R.'"

was glad when he suggested, after dinner at Hampstead that evening, that she should dine alone with him the next night at a restaurant, and go on afterwards to see the Russian Ballet at the Coliseum. The next day was to be her last at the depôt, and she had promised to go to tea with some friends afterwards, but as it was not necessary to go home and change her frock, she could join him at the restaurant.

And again nothing happened to disquiet him till the following afternoon. He was going to his club, where he meant to have tea and see the evening papers till he was due at the restaurant, when a man in some fantastic costume suddenly offered him a handbill.

Alston accepted it mechanically, saw that it was headed in large letters: "READ THIS. IT CONCERNS YOU!" and threw it away, but not in time to avoid the words in writing that were below: "*You think you can defy me,*" he read, "*but I have not done with you yet.—N. R.*"

His chief feeling, however, on this occasion was irritation; this kind of thing was becoming grotesque; in fact, there was a ludicrous side to all these incidents, if he could only bring his sense of humour to bear on them; he might in time, but not quite yet.

By the time he was inside the club he had forgotten this latest warning, and it was not till later that he remembered it. He got to the restaurant some minutes before the appointed time, but the minutes passed, and more and more minutes after them, without bringing Cynthia.

Why had she not come? Was it because—she knew? Would he have a wire presently to tell him that she was not coming?

And, just as he was trying to prepare himself for this, Cynthia arrived, looking more radiantly lovely than ever in her furs, and apparently unaware that she had kept him waiting at all. With unspeakable relief he entered the restaurant with her, and led the way to the table he had reserved.

The restaurant was in one of the streets behind Piccadilly, a quiet little establishment

which had a prestige and distinction of its own, together with the double recommendation of an excellent cuisine and no orchestra.

They had sat down and a French waiter had deferentially handed him the menu. As Alston took it he could not, for all his late resolutions, refrain from starting violently. For across it was scrawled another of those grim messages, more peremptory and menacing than any of the others.

"*You must tell her to-night,*" it ran, "*while you have the chance. In any case, she shall know.—N. R.*"

He felt a deadly chill strike his heart, and the card which he held to screen his face from Cynthia shook in his hand. But only for an instant; why, after all, should he let such things disturb him? Royle could threaten—but he could do no more. As for telling Cynthia, it was unthinkable that he should ever be such a madman as to do that of his own accord. And no one, living or dead, could compel him. No, he had nothing really to fear. Already the writing had flickered out on the page, and his voice was quite steady as he read the items on the menu for Cynthia to choose from.

She was as frankly pleased as a child, declaring that it was such years since she had dined in a restaurant that she had almost forgotten what it was like. She approved of everything, from his choice of a table to the room, with its white walls, panels of old-rose satin, and discreetly tempered lights.

How enchanting she was, he thought, and how dear! Every now and then, amidst her lightest talk, some expression in her charming eyes, some inflection of her gay voice, revealed how deeply she loved him, how intensely proud she was of her lover.

And, by Heaven, he vowed to himself, she should have more reason to be proud of him some day! Soon they would be together like this for all their lives. For—and he must never forget this in future—there was no one but himself who could ever really destroy her love.

So for the remainder of the dinner he gave himself up to the bliss of being with Cynthia, and the terror that had haunted him seemed to have taken its final flight.

Dinner was over; the people at the adjoining tables had already taken their departure, and others were leaving. Alston had paid his bill, but he still sat on with Cynthia. There was no occasion for hurry—time for another cigarette at all events. It was pleasanter and quieter here, listening to her, than being in a noisy theatre where they couldn't talk so well. She was telling him of her plan for his spending Christmas with them—not at Hampstead, but at a delightful hotel in the pine-woods near Bournemouth. And he had welcomed the plan—not that he cared where he spent Christmas, so long as it was with her, but it was delicious to feel that she had arranged it all on his account. He was thinking when he would give her the ring he had bought that morning—in the taxi as they went to the Coliseum—or better, perhaps, on their way home.

And the next instant these pleasant thoughts of his fled, routed by a fear of something so infinitely more appalling than had happened yet that he tried desperately to persuade himself that there was no real foundation for it.

The table he had chosen was by an archway which divided the restaurant, and he sat facing the inner room of the two. This was now deserted, and the waiters had retired, after switching off all the lights but one above a table at the extreme end, where a solitary figure was seated, apparently, though Alston could only see its back, in the act of writing. The figure was that of an officer in uniform, but there was of course nothing strange in that—there had been several in the restaurant that evening. What had aroused Alston's fear was a growing conviction that the writer was one whom he had firmly believed dead, who could not in the nature of things be alive. The set of the shapely head on the square shoulders, the well-groomed auburn hair with a slight wave in it, were strangely like—but it could not be—it must be a delusion! The head was bent, and the mirror in front of it was hung too high to reflect even the forehead; perhaps when the writer looked up—but he did not, he went on writing, as one whose time was short.

Cynthia was still talking of their holiday, how they would golf and walk and dance together, and how soon he would get perfectly well, and go back to do more brilliant work than ever, and he was answering at random, watching feverishly for the moment when the writer would raise his head and end the suspense.

And at last it came—and Alston was in doubt no longer. Only the upper part of the face was visible in the glass, but the high, tanned forehead and the steel-blue eyes were those of Nugent Royle.

They met Alston's for a second or two with a stern inquiry, and then the head was bent once more.

Alston's brain was whirling in a rush of confused thoughts. This, then, was the meaning of that last message! If he did not tell Cynthia himself, Royle would; and Alston could guess how damning and merciless his indictment would be. Whether Royle were alive or had been permitted to simulate life was equally incredible—why trouble about that, when so many scarcely less credible things had happened? He was there in some form; there was no escape from him; if Alston attempted to leave this place with his story untold, Cynthia would hear it at once. Royle would find the means of reaching her—that at least was certain now.

Anything was better than that. By telling her himself, Alston thought, he would be able to present his conduct with such redeeming features as there were; he would anticipate his accuser—perhaps even Nugent might have mercy then, and the worst be spared him. . . . Yes, there was no other course for him; he must speak now, while there was yet time.

"Cynthia," he heard himself saying abruptly, in a voice that scarcely sounded like his own, "there's—there's something I've got to tell you."

"Not *here*, Dick," she protested, with a lightness that was only assumed, for she had been alarmed by the change in his face and manner. "It must be very nearly time for the Russian Ballet."

"When I've done," he said, "I doubt if you'll be in the humour for the Russian Ballet. It's about that night, Cynthia—the night Nugent and I——"

"If you'd rather not go to the Coliseum, darling, we'll go home, and you can tell me on the way."

The figure of the officer in the inner room had stopped writing, and appeared to be watching him intently.

"I must tell you now," said Alston. "You—you don't know all yet."

"I know that you and dear Nugent went out together, a long way round behind the enemy's front-line," she said, seeing that it was best to humour him just then, "to find out—wasn't it whether some place was fortified or not?"

"A ruined farm, yes. An offensive had been planned, and we were sent out to discover if we could how strongly the place was held, whether the Boche had enough machine-guns to hold up our attack, and so forth. We got through their wire all right—our guns had put up a barrage and cut gaps in different places for us first, you see—and then we gradually worked round to the farm and found out all we wanted."

"And had to fight your way back, and Nugent was killed and you badly wounded, and I don't know which of the two I'm prouder of," she said. "But wouldn't it be better not to think of all that just now, Dick? I hoped you were beginning to forget it."

"I've tried," he said. "But I'm not allowed to. It isn't that—it's what happened on our way back."

Was it his fancy, or did the eyes in the mirror look less hard? They were lowered again, and from the writer's action it seemed that he was tearing up whatever he had begun.

"We were trying to make for the gap we got in by," Alston went on, "but a thick fog came on. We had luminous compasses, but it delayed us, of course, and we may have lost our direction a bit. Anyway, before we had a chance of putting up a fight, we were seized from behind and made prisoners."

"How frightfully hard to bear — just when——!"

"I don't know. I think I was glad—to be out of it all. You see, Cynthia, it isn't as if I'd been a soldier from choice. I knew I should loathe it when I applied for a commission, though I'd no rest till I did. And when I got out to the front, it was worse than I thought even. I—I was in almost constant fear—I don't mean that I showed it—I didn't. But it never left me for long."

"Dearest," she said, and laid her hand lightly on his, "you *don't* suppose you were the only one to feel it, do you? Why, that's the truest courage—to fear death, and yet face it!"

"It wasn't being killed outright that I was afraid of," he said. "That got to be the best I expected. It was *pain*, Cynthia; the ghastly pain I'd seen so many poor fellows going through. I—I funked that."

"And you got the Military Cross!" she put. "You absurd dear! And was *this* all you've been worrying about?"

Could he not leave her to think so? The eyes he dreaded were on him still; he read contempt in their fixed stare; and then, with a gesture of sudden determination that Alston remembered as characteristic of Royle, the head was bent once more and the writing began again, slowly, relentlessly. Alston felt that no evasion could save him—he must go on now, to the end.

"No, Cynthia," he said, "that isn't all. There—there's worse to come."

"But, Dick dear," she pleaded, "why distress yourself—and me—by telling me now?"

"Why?" he replied, almost roughly. "Because I *must*. Do you suppose that, if I could help it—— But let me go on with it. . . . After we were captured we were hustled down their trenches—how far I don't know, but it must have been a longish way. Then we were taken back to the Company Commander's dug-out in their support-trench. He questioned us: about our strength, and when our offensive was coming off, and where. You can guess what we said to him. He was an evil-tempered brute—threatened to have us shot. When that failed, he told us he had other means of forcing us to speak, and—and—what they were."

"*Dick!*" she cried, "don't tell me that you and poor Nugent were——"

"Tortured?" he said. "No, no. It—it never came to that."

"Thank God!" she said, under her breath. "But what saved you from it, Dick?"

"I told you just now that what I feared most was pain. I knew I shouldn't be able to stand it. So—so I took the fellow aside, and said—I speak German fairly well, you know—that, on conditions, I was willing to—to tell him all I knew."

She looked at him with wide, indignant eyes. "And Nugent stood by and consented? No, *nothing* will ever make me believe that!"

"He didn't know enough German to understand. One of my conditions was that he shouldn't be told. But that sneering devil told him afterwards, all the same, and congratulated him on owing his life to me, provided my information turned out to be correct. If Nugent could have got at me I believe he would have killed me then."

"I have no doubt he would," she said, in a low voice. "But—*he* was killed, and you were set free."

"Not by them," he said. "The moment after, a shell from one of our own trench mortars—they were firing to cover our return;

there was no idea that we could be up in that part at all—a shell burst right in the middle of us. Nugent, the Boche officer, and all the men who were there were killed on the spot. If I'd been standing a little nearer I should have been killed too. I wished to God I had been! . . . And then it suddenly came to me that I was no traitor after all!"

"No traitor!" she repeated, and covered her eyes with her hands. "You could think that?"

"Wasn't it true?" he said. "I'd betrayed no one, now the only man I had told was dead. I'd still a chance of making good. There was no one about to stop me. I knew I'd been hit, but I didn't feel it much at first. The fog had lifted by that time, and I managed to crawl out to a shell-hole some way off. I lay there all the rest of the night, but at dawn our men started a raid on that part of the Hun line, and brought me in with the other wounded. I was just able to give in my report, and I remember no more till I found myself in a base hospital. . . . Now I've told you, Cynthia. And I suppose it's made you hate me?"

As he spoke he saw that the figure in the inner room had again ceased writing.

Cynthia removed her hands from her eyes, tragic eyes which sought to avoid his. "If it had only been anything else," she said, lifelessly, "I could have—— But I don't hate you. I think I'm sorry for you—a little sorry. I—I dare say you couldn't help being—like that. Only—it's made everything different. It was another man I loved—the man I thought you were!"

"And you—can't care for me any more?"

"I shall always care," she said. "But, if you mean, as I did before—before I knew this, I'm sorry, Dick, but that's impossible—quite impossible. At least, so far as I can think about it at all yet. If, some day, I should come to feel differently, I will tell you so. . . . And now you must let me go home, please—alone."

Alston stood by as she got into the taxi he had ordered, knowing that he must let her go alone; and then he went back to the restaurant, impelled by the hope that Royle would be there no longer.

But there he still sat, waiting. Well, Alston thought, they were alone together—he would have it out with him, alive or dead! He entered the inner room, and as he drew near the mirror he saw the other's full face for the first time, and stopped petrified. For, if in the eyes and upper part of the face there was a rough resemblance to Nugent Royle, it was in all other respects as unlike him as possible.

"Here, you!" said the stranger, holding out a letter to a waiter who had just come in. "Just find someone to take this round at once, will you? He's to bring me the answer here, if there *is* one. And tell him to go to the *stage*-door, mind!" Then after the waiter had gone the officer turned to Alston. "Well, sir," he said, "you seem to know *me* all right, from the way you've been starin' for the last half-hour, but I'm afraid I can't for the life of me——"

"I'm sorry," said Alston, dully. "I—I mistook you for—for a friend of mine."

He turned abruptly and made his way out, passing the table where Cynthia had been talking happily to him so short a time—and yet such an age—ago. He might be with her now, if his overwrought nerves had not tricked him into exaggerating a chance resemblance. But that he could never have done if he had not first been almost harried out of his mind by those secret and terrifying messages. And they were real; it was inconceivable to him that he could have imagined *them*.

Whether they would continue, or cease, now their end had been gained, was a matter of indifference to Alston, as, stunned almost to insensibility, he went on his way. He had walked some distance before he remembered that he was still carrying the engagement-ring he had intended for Cynthia. That must be got rid of at once; the irony of it was more poignant than he could endure.

And then, in the very act of throwing it away, he checked himself as certain words of hers came back to him—words that implied, or seemed to imply, a possibility that, some day, she would relent.

It might be that she had merely tried to soften the blow, that the thought of Nugent would always be an impassable barrier between them. Still, she had left him with just a faint gleam of hope—would it not be like abandoning even that if he threw away the ring?

Yes, he decided, he would keep it—so long as any hope remained to him.

The Uncharted Coast

by A. CONAN DOYLE

No. 1.—THE LAW OF THE GHOST.

IT is safe to say that for some centuries to come the human race will be very actively engaged in defining the laws which regulate psychic affairs, and it is fortunately a line of study which has the peculiar advantage to those who indulge in it that they can pursue it just as well, and probably better, from the other side of the veil. At present there is work lying to hand for a hundred investigators. The innumerable records which exist in various forms, and which are scattered throughout papers, magazines, reports of learned societies, family traditions, etc., are like masses of ore which have been extracted from the ground but are still lying in dumps waiting to be separated into precious ingots on the one side and slag-heap on the other. They have to be examined, collected into classes, reviewed in the light of our ever-increasing psychic knowledge, and an endeavour made to find underlying principles running through this vague collection of matter, so that at last we may touch solid ground by getting hold of some elementary laws. The first thing is that we should have authentic cases, so that the foundation of our reasoning may be sound. The second is to compare these authentic cases together and see what common characteristics they possess, shirking nothing and following the facts wherever they lead without any preliminary prejudice. This is, of course, the true scientific fashion, but it is unfortunately one which has been neglected by most scientific men in approaching this new subject which would not fit in with their preconceived ideas. Let us hunt among these fascinating problems for shards and splinters out of which a noble mosaic will one day be constructed, and let us see whether here and there we may not find two or three pieces which fit together, and give some idea of a permanent pattern, even though it be a fantastic one. I will begin by telling three stories which seem to be absolutely authentic, and then we shall endeavour to trace some underlying connection.

For full particulars of the first case the reader is referred to "West Indian Tales," by Algernon Aspinall, with the explanation that the word "Tales" is not used in the sense of inventions and that the facts are authentic, as is proved by numerous references in the narrative. These facts relate to the singular series of events which happened in connection with the vault at Christchurch, near the village of Oistin, on the south coast of Barbados. In the old slave days, when rum and sugar were the foundations of many a goodly fortune, things were done on a large scale in the West Indies, and this burial vault was a very fine one. It was made of great blocks of coral and cement, partly sunk into the earth, for the graveyard was on an exposed hill, and terrific storms sweep over those latitudes. The entrance was covered by a huge slab of marble. Within, the dimensions of the vault were twelve feet by six and a half. So Cyclopean was the masonry and so remote the site that one would imagine an inmate was almost as secure as a king of Egypt in the heart of his pyramid. A contractor and a gang of skilled workmen would be needed to effect an entrance into so solid a construction. Little did those who erected it imagine that the whole island would be convulsed by the repeated proofs of its insecurity.

In July, 1807, a Mrs. Goddard was buried therein, and her coffin was found undisturbed

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in February, 1808, when a child named Mary Chase was laid in a leaden casket beside her. For years the vault was closed, but on July, 1812, it was opened to admit a Miss Dorcas Chase. The horrified workmen found the coffin of the infant standing on its head in a corner. It was supposed that some mischievous and sacrilegious wretch had been guilty of a senseless outrage; so after the coffin was rearranged the great marble slab was once again placed in position, to be opened next month when a Mr. Chase joined the family group within. During the month there seems to have been no disturbance.

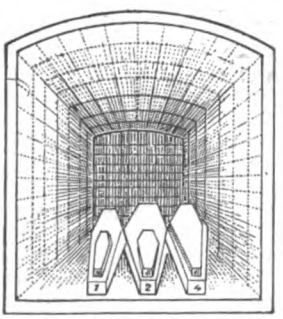
In September, 1816, four years having again elapsed, the vault was opened once more to admit an infant, Samuel Ames. Once again all was in horrible confusion, and the coffins littered across one another. The affair was now becoming a scandal and the talk of the whole settlement—the whites putting it down to vandalism and the negroes to ghosts. Once again the vault was closed, and once again, two months later, it was opened to admit Samuel Brewster. Crowds followed the coffin and gathered round the vault when the great slab was pushed aside. In the short interval everything had again been disarranged, the coffins being abominably mishandled. Mrs. Goddard's coffin, which seems to have been of wood, was broken, but this may have been natural decay. The leaden coffins were scattered at all angles. Once again they were reverently collected, the wooden coffin was tied up, and the vault secured.

Three years later, on July 7th, 1819, Miss Clarke was to be buried in the vault. So great was the public excitement that the Governor, Lord Combermere, of Peninsular fame, attended the ceremony with his staff and aides-de-camp. Things were as bad as ever. The wooden coffin was intact, but the others were scattered in all directions. Lord Combermere was so interested that he had the whole structure searched and sounded, but there was no hidden approach or underground passage. It was an insoluble mystery. The coffins were rearranged, and the floor carefully sanded, so that footsteps would be revealed. The door was cemented up, which seems to have been done on each occasion, but this time the Governor affixed his own particular seal. The British Government had officially entered the lists against the powers of darkness.

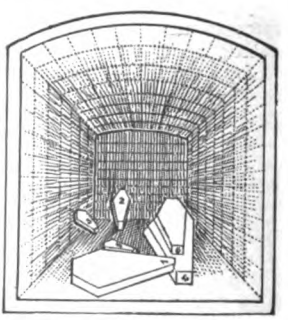
It is humiliating to add that the powers of darkness seemed not in the least abashed either by the Governor or by the Empire which he represented. Next year, in April, 1820, it was determined that an official inspection should be made without waiting for a fresh interment. Lord Combermere, with a formidable official party and a strong ally in the Rev. T. Orderson, rector of the parish, repaired to the vault, where the seals were found intact and all in apparent order. The cement was then broken and the slab removed by the exertions of ten negroes, who had the utmost difficulty in forcing an entrance. On exposing the interior it was found, to the horror and amazement of the party, that the difficulty in opening the vault had been caused by the fact that a leaden coffin within, so heavy that several men could hardly move it, had been jammed upside down against the slab. There was great confusion within, but no marks upon the sand which covered the floor. So horrified was everyone by this final test, that the bodies were now removed and buried elsewhere. The empty vault remains, and is likely for many centuries to remain, as a refuge for snakes or centipedes, upon the lonely headland which overlooks the Atlantic.

What is one to make of such a story as that?

The facts seem to be beyond question. Are there any points which are particularly to be noted from a psychic point of view, in the hope that the germs of law may lie within? One is that the antipathy of those unseen forces was aroused apparently by the *leaden* coffins. When the wooden coffin was alone it was not molested. Its decay seems to have been natural, and when it was tied up it was not again disturbed. If it ever received any injury, it may well have been from the weight of the ponderous leaden coffins which were dashed about around it. That is one possible point. A second and more important one is that all psychic phenomena seem to show that the disembodied have no power of their own, but that it is always derived from the emanations of the living, which we call animal magnetism or other names. Now, this vault with its absolutely air-tight walls was particularly adapted for holding in such forces—being an exaggerated form of that cabinet which is used for that very purpose by a genuine medium. If the walls of cloth of a cabinet can contain these emanations and condense them, how much more the solid walls of this vault? To bring in these weighty leaden coffins, the space must have been crowded with overheated negroes; and when the slab was at once hermetically sealed. these effluvia were enclosed and remained behind, furnishing a possible source of that material power which is needful for material effects. These are two

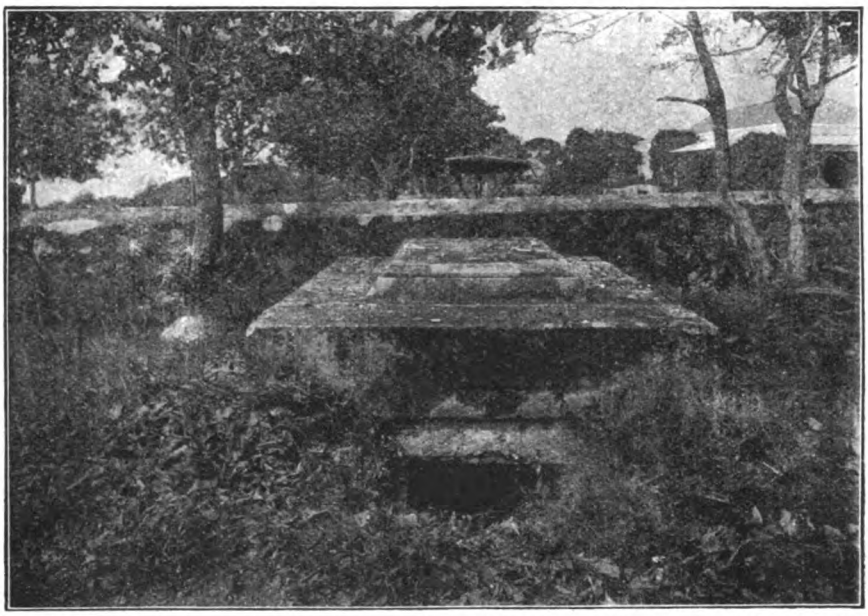


SITUATION OF THE COFFINS WHEN THE VAULT WAS CLOSED, JULY 7, 1819.



THEIR SITUATION WHEN THE VAULT WAS RE-OPENED, APRIL 18, 1820.

From "West Indian Tales" (Duckworth & Co.).



THE VAULT AT CHRIST CHURCH, BARBADOS, IN WHICH A NUMBER OF LEADEN COFFINS WERE MYSTERIOUSLY SCATTERED IN ALL DIRECTIONS, NOT ONCE BUT MANY TIMES.

Photo. by W. E. Hunter—from "West Indian Tales" (Duckworth & Co.)

points worth noting before we pass on to see if any other such cases may fall into line with this one.

We have not far to seek, for one is quoted in the very book under discussion, with a reference to the *European Magazine* for September, 1815, under the heading, "The Curious Vault at Stanton, in Suffolk." In the magazine account it says: "On opening the vault some years since, several leaden coffins with wooden cases that had been fixed on biers were found displaced, to the great astonishment of many. The coffins were placed as before, when some time ago, another of the family dying, they were a second time found displaced. Two years after, they were found not only all off the biers, but one coffin, as heavy as to require eight men to raise it, was found on the fourth step that leads into the vault." There, unhappily, the information ends. It tallies very closely with the West Indian case so far as it goes, but is far weaker as regards the evidence and the details. I have made inquiry from the present vicar of the parish, but have been unable to improve either the one or the other. The statement that the phenomenon occurred twice and the precise information as to the situation of the coffin upon the fourth step of the stair seem to remove the story from vague rumour, and to show that it was based upon some actual fact.

The next case, however, is fuller and more circumstantial.

It comes from the Livonian village of Ahrensburg, in the Baltic, and, remote as the scene is, the evidence is well attested. There is a considerable cemetery in the village, which is dotted with small private chapels, each of them with a family burial vault beneath it. The finest of these belonged to a family named Buxhoewden, which faced the public high road, and contained certain posts to which the horses of the farmers used to be haltered when the owners were occupied in the town. The first signs of anything peculiar lay in the behaviour of these creatures, which showed such symptoms of terror that they attracted the notice of passers-by. They were covered with sweat, trembled all over, and in three cases actually died from the violence of their emotion. At the same time, certain loud but vague sounds were heard to come, either from the chapel or from the vault beneath it. These portents were in the early summer of the year 1844.

In July a member of the Buxhoewden family died, and the hearse horses, on approaching the cemetery, showed the same signs of terror as the others. The service in the chapel was interrupted by hollow groans, which may have been imagined by a congregation who were already predisposed to alarm. What was not imagination, however, was the fact that those who afterwards descended into the vault found the coffins there, which had been in rows, cast into a confused heap upon the wooden floor. These coffins seem to have been of massive oak, very strongly and heavily made. This might have been the work of some enemy to the family, but the doors of the vault had been secured and the locks were intact. There was always the possibility of false keys, however, so the coffins were replaced in their original order and the place very carefully secured.

As the agitation of the horses and the general unrest of the community still continued, the chief man of the district, Baron de Guldenstubbe, took up the matter officially, and so the Russian Government found itself involved in the same one-sided contention from which the Governor of Barbados had gained so little satisfaction. With two of his family, he made a preliminary examination, and then, finding the coffins once again in confusion, he formed a committee of investigation consisting of himself, the local Bishop, the Burgomeister, a physician named Luce, and four representative citizens.

"THE DOOR OF THE VAULT WAS CEMENTED UP, BUT THIS TIME THE GOVERNOR AFFIXED HIS OWN PARTICULAR SEAL."

On entering the vault, they again found that the enemy had been at work, and that the contents were scattered in all directions. Only three coffins, those of a very saintly grandmother and of two little children, were undisturbed. Attempted robbery was suggested as an explanation, which was the more plausible as an adjoining vault had once been entered and some gold fringe taken from the coffins. But nothing was now missing, nor was there any means of entrance. The committee pursued its research with great care, even to the point of opening some coffins to see if rings and trinkets buried with the owners were still within. It was found that this was so. Workmen were then called in to examine the floor and walls, but no secret entrance could be discovered.

Everything was now closed up once more and the disconsolate committee withdrew, after placing heavy seals upon the door. Before leaving the vault fine ashes were scattered all over the wooden floor, and also over the steps leading down, and the pavement of the chapel. Finally, guards were set for three days and nights. It must be admitted that they did things thoroughly in the village of Ahrensburg. At the end of that time the commission returned in full state, with the whole population lining the churchyard rails, eager to hear the result.

The seals were unbroken, the door unopened, but the interior of the vault was in the usual state of chaos. No signs were found upon the ashes, and no human feet had entered, but great forces had, none the less, been at work. The secret powers, reinforced rather than abashed by the recent visit of the commission, had wrought far greater mischief than before. All the coffins were scattered, save the same three which had been exempt before. Some of the heaviest had been placed upside down, so that the corpse was on its head, and in one instance the lid had burst and the right arm of the inmate, who was a man who had died by his own hand, was protruding and pointing towards the ceiling. Such was the fearsome spectacle which greeted the commission. They were duly noted in a detailed report, and are still to be consulted among the official records of the island of Oesel, with the names of the witnesses attached.

It is also on record that the effect upon the mind of Dr. Luce, who was a man of considerable attainments and a Voltairian in religion, was a complete change of mental outlook and that revulsion from materialism which any actual contact with the spiritual world, even in its crudest forms, must logically produce.

The result of these gruesome phenomena was that the coffins were removed from the vault

and were buried in earth, after which complete tranquillity seems to have descended upon the little village. Not only were there no disturbances to vex the population, but the horses were observed to occupy their old stance without any symptoms of terror. Nothing was left of the whole incident save a memory, but it was a memory which should not be allowed to die, for the facts are really as well attested as facts could be. Apart from the official record, Mr. Dale Owen, who was American Minister to Naples, and a man of great intelligence, met Miss de Guldenstubbe and her brother in 1859 and took their personal recollections of the whole matter. It is from his work that I have taken the details.

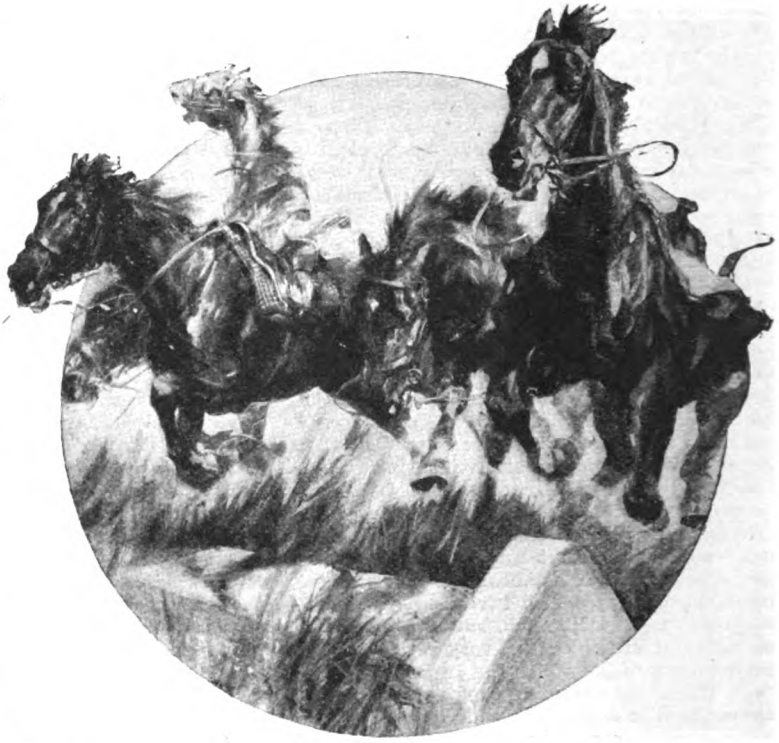
No doubt many other such cases could be recorded, but here at least are three which appear to be authentic, and which reproduce the same characteristics. If relics of some strange animal were found in three different localities, the first conclusion among men of science would be that such an animal did exist, and was henceforth to be included among the creatures of earth. The next proceeding would be to compare the relics and to endeavour to reconstruct some image of the new comer. In the same way, these three cases may be said fairly to establish the fact of these curious phenomena which involve the desecration of graves—a fact which, however gruesome, does at least strike at the very roots of that material view of life which has been so fashionable. When we come to compare the cases, however, and to deduce the underlying laws, the psychic student can at best only point to a few possible indications which may be of value. . .

It has already been stated that one or more living people in a confined space which is afterwards closed up may leave behind them something human and yet invisible, which is sufficiently subtle to be used by forces from the other side as a basis for material phenomena. All movements of solid objects, touched or untouched, in the presence of a medium are to be explained in this fashion, and the force may be expected to be stronger when confined within a limited space. In the case of the Cheriton dug-out, which occupied public attention a couple of years ago, the worker and the boy were busy in a narrow excavation. One or the other was mediumistic—that is to say, emitted to an unusual extent this emanation—with the result that the phenomena occurred in the same way, though with less force, when both of them had left the work for their luncheon, as Mr. Jaques, the owner of the property, was able to testify. Let us suppose that in the case of each of these three vaults there was an accumulation of this mysterious, but very certain power left behind by the coffin-bearers, and possibly reinforced by the committees of inquiry, who would have been very amazed had they been told that they were, in all probability, themselves contributing to the phenomena. There, I think, you have the physical basis which is necessary for every spiritual manifestation, for it cannot too often or too clearly be insisted upon that spirits are not omnipotent and irresponsible forces, but that they are under a rule of law no less strict than our own. One of these laws is that a physical basis is needed for every physical manifestation. We may find in the future some non-human basis, for it is conceivable that some subtle chemical action could be established which would generate this magnetic force, just as zinc and acid generate the kindred mystery of electricity. But a physical basis there must be. No ghost was ever self-supporting. He can exist without our help, but he cannot manifest to human eyes without drawing his material from human (or possibly animal) sources. That, as it seems to me, is one of the basic laws of the new world of science.

There is some evidence, which could be cited in full if it did not lead us down a lengthy side street, that when a life has been cut short before it has reached its God-appointed term, whether the cause be murder or suicide (of accident I speak with less confidence), there remains a store of unused vitality which may, where the circumstances are favourable, work itself off in capricious and irregular ways. This is, I admit, a provisional theory, but it has been forced upon my mind by many considerations, and especially by an inquiry which I conducted myself where a series of childish and apparently senseless physical phenomena ended in the discovery of the body of a child in the adjacent garden. Such a theory would go some way to explain, or at least to throw some dim light upon, the disturbances which from all past time have been associated with scenes of violence and murder. If it could be conceived that the unseen part of a man is divisible into the higher, which passes on as spirit, and the lower, which represents animal functions and mere unused vitality, then it is this latter which has not been normally worked off in a life prematurely ended, and which may express itself in strange semi-intelligent fashion afterwards. In dreams one is conscious of some such division, where the higher functions occasionally bring us back touches of the most spiritual, while the lower functions, deprived for the time of judgment, humour, and all the spirit qualities, evolve a capricious and grotesque life of their own, which has neither reason nor sense of proportion, and yet seems very real to us in our slumbers. It is not a subject upon which one could be dogmatic, but the days are passing when all such cases can be disposed of by being brushed aside and ignored as senseless superstition. Some sort of framework must be formed into which they can be fitted, and with fuller knowledge the fit will be closer.

Finally, the question arises—What was the object of such phenomena? We see that the result in at least two cases out of three was that the dead were buried elsewhere. Apparently for some reason the earth burial may have been desired instead of the seclusion of the vault. It would certainly hasten the absolute decomposition of the body, if that should be good from the point of view of the other world. This seems a far-fetched supposition, and one very much at variance with the belief of those numerous nations who have practised the art of embalming and corpse-preservation; but if this was not the

object of the disturbance, it must be admitted that it is difficult to see what other result was attained, save a very compelling proof of unseen intelligences and powers. If a speedy decomposition was the object aimed at, then the leaden and heavy oak coffins would check the process, which would be swifter in the more fragile wooden ones. This might conceivably explain the particular violence which seems to have been used towards the more permanent materials. Perhaps, however, we lose time in searching for rational explanations, since there is ample evidence that there can be rowdiness and hooliganism beyond the veil as well as here.



"THE CEMETERY CONTAINED CERTAIN POSTS TO WHICH THE HORSES OF THE FARMERS USED TO BE HALTERED, AND THE FIRST SIGNS OF ANYTHING PECULIAR LAY IN THE BEHAVIOUR OF THESE CREATURES, WHICH SHOWED SYMPTOMS OF TERROR."

One remark should be made before passing on to another form of ghostly manifestation. It has been said that the basis for physical results lies in the human organism. It is not meant, however, that there is any relation between the small amount often taken from the medium and the great physical results obtained. It is clear that the unseen forces can get great power from a limited supply of this subtle material. In the case carefully observed and noted by Professor Zollner, of Leipzig, a beam of wood which two horses could not have dragged apart was shattered into pieces against the grain in the presence of Slade. A friend of mine who was present at a meeting of the Goligher circle saw a table ascend in the air and remain there, although four strong men did all they could to drag it down. It is true that in a sitting of this sort the medium, Miss Goligher, frequently registered a loss of weight amounting to a stone in a *séance*, upon the weighing dial which Dr. Crawford had erected; but it is clear that the force exerted by the unseen powers was very much greater than this and was due to their own manipulation of the material which her organism had provided. In some of the sittings of D. D. Home the force was so great that the whole building used to shake as if a heavy train were passing below it.

And here comes one of the mysteries which bear directly upon that definition of spirit law which is so desirable. In spite of the possibility of using vast power, there is a clear and, so far as credible records go, an unbroken ordinance that a ghost may not for its own personal ends destroy anything or injure anyone. This may seem in contradiction to the broken coffins, but that may not have been for personal ends, but an accident due to the falling about of the heavy weights. Here is an authentic case in illustration.

A great friend of mine, a Roman Catholic priest, whose word could not be doubted by anyone who knew him, was sent for a rest cure to a lonely house upon the coast, which was frequently used by other priests for the same purpose. Save for an old crone and one or two charitable visitors, he was absolutely alone. After a few days he became conscious of strange noises in the house, which at last reached such a point that, to quote his own description, "it sounded at night as if there were a steam-engine snorting and clanking in the room below." Nothing was visible, but the sounds were incessant, and were heard by two visitors as clearly as by the inmate. The priest is himself open, more than most men, to psychic impressions, and upon that night he had a dream or vision

which was so absolutely clear that he determined to act upon it. He descended in the morning and asked the old woman whether there was not an unused room in the basement. She answered that there was. He entered it and found that he had already seen it in his dream—a small, dusty, cobwebbed place, with some old books of theology heaped in the corners. He walked at once to one of these heaps, picked up a book, as in his dream, opened it, took out a sheet of written paper, glanced at it to make sure that it was really as revealed, and then carried it into the kitchen, where he stuffed it between the bars of the grate. The paper was a written preparation for confession, made out by some over-conscientious or over-methodical inmate of the house, who had noted down a good many more things than were desirable for public perusal. Presumably he had died shortly afterwards, and had been worried by the recollection of this document, which he had taken these means to have destroyed. There were no further disturbances of any sort within the house.

Now, here is a story which is undoubtedly true, and which cannot be met by any of the ingenious explanations of the honest but sceptical researcher. If the subconscious knowledge of my friend could have told him that the paper was there, it certainly could not have caused the noises which alarmed him. It has to be examined as a fact, as the zoologist already quoted would examine the skin of his rare animal. The unhappy spirit could apparently draw power either from the old housekeeper, or, as is more likely, from the young and psychic priest, to shake the very house with vibrations, and yet, with all this power, he could not destroy a frail sheet of paper, but had to bring its destruction about in this indirect fashion. This seems to be a solid and noteworthy conclusion. All authentic tales where spirits linger earthbound because they appear to be worried over earthly things—concealed treasure, lost documents, or other such matters—come into this category, and the question which one naturally asks, "Why can't they set the matter right for themselves?" is answered by, "They have not the power. It is against the law."

I might quote in corroboration a similar experience of my own. A lady, the widow of an officer, who inhabited a large cottage in the north of Hampshire, was so plagued by incessant noises in the house that she seriously thought of leaving it, although she leased it upon very advantageous terms. Her mother wrote and asked me to help in the matter, and informed me that her daughter was highly psychic, that she possessed the power of automatic writing, and that this writing assured her that the disturbing force was the spirit of a man named Mason, that he had left a paper in a cupboard in a certain room, and that he was much troubled in mind because this paper had not been destroyed. No such cupboard was known to the lady, but, on examining the room and removing a heavy article of furniture (the cottage had been taken furnished), a door was actually found and a long boxroom cupboard disclosed, which extended the whole length of the wall. I went down in the hope of being of some assistance, and I found that by the time I had arrived a good part of the plaster in the partition wall between the bedroom and the boxroom had been loosened, but nothing had been found. The credibility of the spirit had been increased, however, by the fact that in the automatic writing he had given the name of a previous tenant of the house, some fifty years before, which proved, on inquiry, to be correct. I made a very thorough search, from which I emerged absolutely covered with dust and plaster. I was unable to find any hidden paper, but it was clear to me that some bell-wires had been taken through that way in the past, and that if there had been a paper it would probably have been seen at that time. I asked the ladies to join me, therefore, in a table *séance*, all of us placing the tips of our fingers very lightly upon the surface of the table. Movements soon followed, and in response to my question the name "Mason" was spelled out. I asked him if he were satisfied that we had done all we could to meet his wishes. He answered "Yes." I then asked him if he was convinced that the papers were really gone. He again agreed. I then took it upon myself to point out to him that he had been acting very selfishly for some years, that in his anxiety over his own papers he had caused great unhappiness to people who lived in the house, and had never wronged him; that so long as he worried himself about earthly affairs he would remain earthbound, and that he would be far better employed if he turned his thoughts to higher things and endeavoured to progress in his new surroundings. I then asked him whether, if we prayed for him, it would assist him onwards, to which he vigorously assented; so we promised to pray every day if he in his turn would promise to give no further trouble. Upon his agreeing to this, which he did by spelling out the two letters "D" and "V," we brought the matter to an end. That was in May of this year, 1919, and I have had two letters since in which the lady assures me that the conditions in the house are entirely changed, and that, for the time at least, all trouble is over. "Mason has kept his word," she says, "as all hauntings have ceased, and there is a strong feeling of restfulness and peace in the house which it is impossible to describe."

A case which fits very naturally into this category is that which is recorded of the late Bishop Wilberforce, the date of the incident being, if I remember right, 1883. The Bishop was staying at some nobleman's seat, and was three times aware of the presence of another clergyman, whom he at first supposed to be the chaplain, but finally found to be a very lifelike materialized form. In this case, as in that of the priest already quoted, the object of the appearance was the destruction of some papers, which was duly effected.

I believe that all these varied experiences have been sent to us, not to amuse us by tales to be told and then forgotten, but as the essential warp and woof of a new spiritual garment which is to be woven for the modern world. We live

in an age which has long demanded a sign, yet when the sign was sent it was blind to it. I cannot understand the frame of mind of those who view proofs of survival which appear in the Bible as of most vital importance, and yet close their mind to the same thing when they reappear before our very eyes. I believe most of the evidence in the sacred books, where it is not perverted by mistranslation, interpolation, or forgery, to be perfectly good evidence; but no honest mind could say that, judged by human standards of credibility, it could for an instant compare, in its demonstration of the fate which awaits the soul, with the psychic revelations of recent years. In the latter case the witnesses are thousands in number, are men of the highest credibility, and have placed in many cases their personal experiences upon record, so that any objection can be lodged. Modern Britain does not disprove, but confirms, ancient Judea. We are a more scientific age, however, and we wish to know the how and the why. Such inquiries are no longer, with so great a wealth of material, beyond the scope of our brains. In this article I have endeavoured to indicate two well-marked laws—the one that it is the effluvia of the human organism which furnish the basis of physical manifestations from the unseen, the other that there is a strict limitation of psychic power, which does not prevent noise and subsequent disturbance, but does stand in the way of destructive or personal violence.

This power of producing noise and commotion may, it is true, cause such great misery to those who endure it that it may amount to mental torture. There is the well-known case of Miss Clavion, the famous French actress, who refused the advances of a young Breton suitor. The man died two years later, with menaces against Miss Clavion upon his lips. He was as good as his word, and proved the wisdom of her rejection by the unmanly persecution to which he subjected her after his death. This took the form of loud cries, which frequently broke out when she was in the company of others, and were so terrible that some of the hearers fainted. In the later stages of her persecution these cries gave place to the sound of a musket going off, which occurred once a day through a particular window of her house. On ninety days running this phenomenon occurred; and was most fully investigated, as the cries had also been, by the Parisian police, who placed spies in the street and sought constantly, but in vain, for any normal explanation. Finally, after two years, the persecution stopped, the time having been foretold by the dead man, who declared that he would upset her life for the same period as she had upset his. He had certainly done so, but, like all revenge, it was probably a two-edged knife, which cut him more deeply than his victim.

"HE PICKED UP A BOOK, AS IN HIS DREAM, OPENED IT, AND TOOK OUT A SHEET OF WRITTEN PAPER."

A more justifiable persecution, but one which also amounted to torture, is detailed by Mrs. Carter Hall, the authoress, as having come within her personal observation in her youth. In this case a young officer had inflicted the greatest of all injuries upon a beautiful young woman, who afterwards died. The resulting persecution may have come not from her gentle spirit, but from that of someone who loved her and desired to avenge her; but it was of the most atrocious character. Particulars will be found in Mr. Dale Owen's "Footfalls"—a book so accurate in its cases and so wise in its deductions that it should be a classic upon this subject. The unfortunate officer was attended wherever he went by such noises and disturbances that at last no landlady would let rooms to him, and he was hunted from house to house, a miserable and despairing man, alternately praying for relief and cursing at his unseen enemy. No dog would stay with him, and even his relatives were scared at his company, so that he had to leave his home for fear of driving his mother and sister into an asylum. "It is hard to be so punished," he said to Mrs. Carter Hall, "but perhaps I have deserved it." Possibly this admission may have proved to be the dawn of better days.

I hope that in some future articles I may be able to outline some other of the laws which govern these matters, and to illustrate them by examples which show their workings and their limitations. Even the faint indications of order which I have been able to indicate may encourage other minds more competent than my own to abandon their attitude of indifference or denial, and to get on with these fresh problems which lie upon the direct path of human progress.

[*Next month: "Some New Lights on Old Crimes."*]

Luck and Skill in Games.

A SYMPOSIUM OF EXPERTS.

IT has always been a debatable point with the player of games as to exactly what bearing luck has upon the result. We have invited a number of leading players to give their views on the subject. An analysis of the various opinions expressed shows a general agreement that luck does influence the outcome of most sports and games. At the same time many of the writers express a firm belief that the greater the player the more likely is he to rise superior to fortune. But it must be admitted that of all the games 'invented by the idleness of man," chess is the only one entirely devoid of luck.

LAWN TENNIS.

M. J. G. RITCHIE,

Ex-Doubles Champion.

"I certainly think the factor of luck has a very big effect on the outcome of lawn tennis matches. A good deal more, in fact, than is generally imagined, particularly when the players are pretty level. The spin of a racket, a net-cord stroke, bad decisions, and so forth have determined the fate of many a match. One of the most extraordinary lucky strokes I ever saw was in a match I once played in Belgium many years ago. I was contesting a single in a double court, the full-sized double net being up, with, of course, the usual side posts. My opponent just managed to fluke a return so that the ball bounded on the top of one of the net posts and fell into my court. The fact that the ball bounced right on the post suggests how far it would have been 'out,' as the stroke was an oblique one, made from near the centre of the court. I appealed to the umpire for the point on the ground that the side posts were to all intents and purposes the termination of the net and that my opponent's return had consequently struck something outside the court. My contention was disallowed."

J. C. PARKE,

Davis Cup International.

"The joyous or curséd (as the case may be) element of luck plays a smaller part in lawn tennis than in any of the other games which I have tried. In golf the scratch player may always hope to beat his plus opponent, but the scratch man in lawn tennis who hopes to defeat his owe fifteen rival is an optimist indeed.

"My luckiest stroke was the winning ace of the final for the Northern Championship in 1913 against the late Captain A. F. Wilding. It was only my second tournament of the year, and consequently I was in pretty poor training and fairly tired by the time I had reached 6–5 and 40–30 in the fifth set. Wilding put up a good lob, and I felt it was a case of 'do or die,' so I went out for a winning smash. I hit too soon, and instead of burying the ball in the corner as I had intended, I just touched it with the top of my racket with sufficient force to carry it over the net. Wilding made a gallant rush to reach it, but the effort was hopeless from the first, as the reverse spin on the ball brought it back almost into the net—and it was my third year for the Cup, too!

"My unluckiest stroke was against N. E. Brookes in the Davis Cup match in America in 1914. I was within a point of the match in the fifth set, and my passing shot caught Brookes on the unexpected side, so that in the effort of reaching it, he had to turn his back to the net. Unfortunately for me his return hopped straight into my body as I was running across my base-line, and with half a court absolutely open I was helpless. I lost the match eventually, after again being within one point of success."

RUGBY FOOTBALL.

J. E. GREENWOOD,

Cambridge University and England.

"I think the factor of luck enters into Rugby football less than in any other sport. The only real element of luck is caused by accident. The better side on the day nearly always wins, but some players are very fond of putting down their own rotten play to good luck on the part of their opponents.

"Take the case of the England versus South Africa match in 1913. South Africa won by a margin of two penalty goals, kicked from half way. The penalties were lucky because the referee never could have given them close to the goal and they were caused by the Africans wheeling the English pack, but there was no luck in the goals themselves, which were splendid kicks. If the kicks had been missed there would have been no talk of luck. Likewise when Wodehouse missed a kick right in front of goal and the late R. W. Poulton failed to pass to Lowe when on the African line, that was not bad luck.

"Accidents, of course, are different and may be good luck to a side. Thus in the 'Varsity match of 1910, the much-abused Cambridge side was leading by five points quite near the end when an unfortunate accident to Bryn Lewis completely changed the run of the game, and Oxford snatched a lucky victory.

"No, the true sportsman in Rugby football rarely refers to luck in the game, but rather to the bad play of his own side or the good play of his opponents."

ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL.

PETER McWILLIAM,

Newcastle United F.C. and Scotland. Now Manager Tottenham Hotspur F.C.

"Generally speaking good play predominates over luck in Association football. What luck there is in the game usually centres round the goal, for, as we are always being told, 'only goals count.' A lucky deflection of the ball, or the goalkeeper getting unsighted, often makes all the difference in the world. Then, again, there is the weather, which, though not luck in the ordinary sense of the word, is something over which the best team in the world has no control. A windy day for instance often brings a good team down to the standard of poor opponents. The biggest piece of luck in a football match that I recall occurred during Newcastle United's Cup campaign of 1910, when it will be remembered we won the trophy by defeating Barnsley in the Final at Liverpool, after a draw at the Palace. On the whole we had little to thank Dame Fortune for after the first match. This was against Stoke, when we could not seem to play our usual scientific game. A few minutes from time the score was one goal all, but their centre-forward then broke through and found himself with the ball at his feet some three or four yards from goal. The Stoke forward should have scored just how he liked, but to our custodian's surprise and joy the shot somehow or the other hit him and bounded back into play. We won the replay all right, and never looked back until the Cup was won."

ROYAL AUCTION BRIDGE.

ERNEST BERGHOLT,

The well-known Bridge expert of "The Field."

"Not such a simple matter to decide as it might at first appear to the uninitiated. In the first place, does luck at cards really average itself out in the long run? Theory says yes; but a somewhat extensive experience has convinced me that certain players are persistently bad cardholders, certain others exceptionally good ones. If this be admitted (though the hard-headed mathematician will deny it), the statistics that have come under my notice are vitiated at the source.

"The extent to which prearranged conventions have been adopted, on the other hand, is obviously a most important ingredient in the rival element of skill. American Auction Bridge, for example, is far more artificial than British. Adding the kindred element of team-work to a highly arbitrary system of declaring, some of the Knickerbocker Club players in New York recently succeeded in sweeping the board in Duplicate Auction. There are now, I am informed by Mr. R. F. Foster, at least

four wholly arbitrary Doubles in common use in New York. Two of them force the partner to bid when he would not otherwise do so. A third has been devised to show a sure trick in an opponent's suit, after having made some other bid or assist. The fourth is to defeat the contract. All such weapons, in inexperienced hands, recoil upon the user; but after team practice has developed special skill in their application, it is easy to see that they may become very formidable.

"Speaking loosely and generally, I should estimate that the best skill, assuming English methods, has about a five per cent. advantage. Assuming a highly-developed prearranged scheme of bidding (which, in my opinion, ruins the game), I estimate that as much as even a ten per cent. advantage might be secured."

CRICKET.

JACK HOBBS,

Surrey and England.

"Quite apart from the spin of the coin, when tossing for innings, there is undoubtedly a lot of luck in cricket. I am not referring, as a batsman, to the oft-quoted 'blind-spot' ball, for one plays naturally at its pitch, thereby dealing with it as safely as any other delivery. I am rather thinking of the little slices of luck from missed catches and balls which beat everybody but somehow or the other fail to hit the wickets. I remember such a case in my own career at Melbourne in 1912. On that historic occasion we required over two hundred to win, when early in my second innings, with only a few runs to my credit, Cotter bowled a beautiful fast ball which just missed my leg stump. It was pure luck that I was not bowled, as I was 'beaten to the wide.' After this let-off I stayed at the wickets to make one hundred and twenty-six not out, and we won the match by eight wickets. And there are many other such instances. Then take the case of a batsman like David Denton of Yorkshire, who is credited with being a very lucky batsman. In his case I do not agree, for after all, if you make a habit of going for the bowling there are risks to be faced. When one attains success by such methods it is surely but another case of fortune favouring the brave."

BILLIARDS.

MELBOURNE INMAN,

Champion.

"There is no such thing as luck in billiards. When a man breaks down it is always through lack of skill or carelessness. I never break down through bad luck; I break down either because I have made a bad stroke then or just before, or because it is beyond my power to score, not because I am unlucky. My opponents are always talking about luck, for the simple reason that they gamble with the balls. They take outside chances and then when they miss say, 'There's bad luck for you.' I never gamble with the balls. Every stroke I make is, after scoring, to leave them in a certain position. If I don't attain that position it is either because I played the stroke badly or was not skilful enough.

"Omar Khayyám tells you there is no luck about billiards. 'The ball no question makes of Ayes or Noes, but left or right, as strikes the player, goes.' You may know that my hobby is horse-racing, and that I have a few animals in training. This is a game that luck does enter into!

"An instance of my good luck was some years ago when the 'Anchor Stroke' was first introduced. I was playing Reece a match for two hundred pounds, and twice during the game he got the balls into the desired position. He was new to the stroke then and did not go right out as I expected him to do, and I won the game. I looked upon the stroke with much misgiving when I departed for Australia a week later. Soon after I had gone Reece made a break of half a million by means of the stroke, and by the time I returned it was barred. This was a real instance of good luck."

THOMAS NEWMAN,

A coming Champion.

"Luck plays a big part in the game of billiards. It is a curious thing, too, that this factor always seems to favour the player who is doing well. Its effect is especially

noticeable when a hard-hit stroke is played and the balls allowed to run practically anywhere they please. Invariably there is something easy left—if your luck is in—if not the balls go dead safe.

"Sometimes a player cannot do anything wrong, and in a big break of five hundred or six hundred luck is bound to come into play because of the numerous difficulties that have to be surmounted. Especially is this so in the case of a player who indulges in close-range work versus top-of-the-table play. An extra turn or roll of the ball will either make or end the break. A great deal also depends on the positions which are left. A player may be in tip-top form and yet unable to get going for an hour or so because his opponent has been fortunate enough to leave the balls safe, particularly when breaking down over an easy shot. Sometimes one plays to leave the balls awkwardly, which is skill, not luck.

"Luck is also very evident in double baulks and, of course, in connection with our old friend the fluke. The last-named 'stroke' is, however, often most useful in causing the game to turn completely round. I remember some years ago having the luck to fluke with my score a hundred, after which I added seven hundred odd, making my record break of eight hundred and twenty-nine against H. W. Stevenson."

GOLF.

H. H. HILTON,

Open Champion, 1892, 1897. Amateur Champion, 1900–1–11–13.

"That the element of luck enters into all games is undeniable, but the higher the standard of skill the less likely is fortune to have a very marked bearing on results. Nevertheless any particular case of ill fortune will, of course, have the same effect on the play of both good and indifferent players. The great performer in any form of athletics is, however, invariably able to stand the rude buffets of fortune much more philosophically than his less gifted brother.

"The element called luck may have a strong bearing on the result of many games and matches, but my experience teaches me that in an athletic career of any length, luck, good or bad, will almost inevitably average itself in the long run. The philosophical, stout-hearted individual will in the end rise superior to the fetish of luck.

"In the earlier days of my golfing career I played in three final rounds in the Championship and was defeated in all of them. I can now see that those defeats were not a little due to a certain lack of resolution, and consequently a temperamental inclination to be influenced by the trend of luck. Since that time I have played in nine final rounds and not been defeated in any of them."

HARRY VARDON,

Six times Open Golf Champion.

"Undoubtedly there is an element of luck in golf or a greater one, perhaps, than in most other games. It is played in circumstances of Nature instead of in a field of certain size and character; it is played over undulating ground from which the ball may take an unexpected 'kick' for good or ill; amid sandhills and rabbit scrapes; through narrow fairways flanked by gorse and bracken and long grass, in which—if you happen to hit a crooked shot—a lot depends upon the depth of growth in which your ball chances to lie.

"What the golfer has to do is to reduce luck to a minimum by his own skill in keeping to the correct path and cultivate a temperament which will enable him to accept perversity, when he meets it, as part of the game, and make up his mind to get level with Fortune.

"In some respects, the luckiest stroke that ever I played was in the open championship of 1914 at Prestwich. Taylor and I were coupled, and it was touch and go as to which of us would win. At the eleventh hole in the third round my ball lay buried in the bunker to the left of the green. It could not be seen. The sand was scraped aside several times to enable me to obtain a glimpse of it, but so loose and fine was the sand that it kept on rolling back and hiding the ball from view.

"At last I decided to have a go at it without seeing it. 'Now,' I thought, 'if I push it farther into the sand or up against the face of the bunker, I shall lose the championship for certain'—for I had not a stroke to spare. I let fly at the position which, so far as I could remember, the ball occupied, and out it came, to drop nicely on the green. That was lucky, for while I was full of hope and determination, I had no idea what was going to happen when I swung the club at the hidden ball."

WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE DONE?

A POINT of ETHICS

by F. Britten Austin

ILLUSTRATED BY TOM PEDDIE

HE leaned forward across the flower-decked dinner-table and raised his glass.

"To many happy anniversaries, darling!"

The pretty woman he addressed raised her glass also. Gowned in a simple evening robe, whose discreet *décolletage* revealed shoulders still youthfully rounded, she was the incarnation of that delicate refinement which lifts beauty into charm with one deft touch. The single dark rose at her breast was its present symbol. It was also, indubitably, the deliberate symbol of something more. The large, emotional eyes which smiled upon him were radiant with happiness.

"*Many* anniversaries, Jack!" she echoed, shaking her head slowly in emphasis, her gaze on his. "All as happy as this—all of us together!"

Both turned, as with a common thought, to the demure little five-year-old girl who watched them with grave eyes from her place at the dinner-table. She smiled at their smiles, confidently.

"I'm as fond of her as you are, Evelyn," he said, with evident sincerity. "Never fear! I couldn't love her more if she were my own daughter."

"You couldn't be kinder to her, Jack," said the young woman, in affectionate agreement. "Oh, my dear, we are very fortunate, both of us, Dorothy and I! Without you!" She sighed. "A whole year! A whole year of perfect happiness! I thought I was happy before—but I did not know what happiness was—until it began a year ago to-day!"

He smiled.

"Nor I, Evelyn. Looking back, it seems that I only began to live on the day I married you." He glanced around him. "A year ago! You were right, dear, to have our little dinner here to-night, and not at River Lawn. You were right to keep this place going—it reminds us both of our starting-point." His tone warmed with affection. "But, then, you are always right!" She beamed with gratitude.

"I wanted to keep it because it was *my* home—it was what I brought to you. You give me our home at River Lawn, Jack—and you know how I love it. But this—this is where you came to me, and it's all sacred to me. I couldn't bear to change a thing in it. Besides," she added, smilingly lifting her argument out of sentimentality, "it is really an economy, isn't it? With your work we must have a city home as well. Why change this flat for another which would perhaps be less convenient, and which we should have to refurnish?"

"Quite," he agreed. "I gave in to you about it long ago. But I didn't like it at first, I'll admit."

"You are too big a man, Jack, dear, to be jealous of the past. And I am sure Harry would not mind, if he could know." Her eyes looked past him, dreamily reminiscent. "Poor old Harry!" she said, after a little silence.

"I should like to have met him," he said, conversationally, getting on with his fish. "He must have been a good chap."

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"Oh, he was! I wish I could have got some news of him—of how he was killed. No one in the regiment seemed to know anything. It is dreadful to go out like that—no one knowing how!" She shuddered. Then, with an instinctive movement to break the spell of unwanted memories, she pressed the bell for the maid to clear the course from the table.

The conversation resumed on the everyday matters of his profession. She thoroughly identified herself with her husband's interests and discussed them, as was her wont, with intelligent sympathy. She was one of those women who stimulate all the latent potentialities of their men. He—it was obvious from the clear-cut features—was both resolute and clever; a man who would go far. Already Satterthwaite was a name in the Courts for which clients would pay big fees.

They were discussing the important case of the day when suddenly she looked round, startled.

"Jack! Someone has come in—or gone out. I heard the hall-door slam!"

"Imagination, my dear," he replied, smiling sceptically. "The maids are busy—they would not go out. We should have heard the bell if there were a visitor. No one has a key except ourselves."

The words were scarcely uttered when the door behind them opened. The child, who sat facing it, stared in amazement for a second, and then slipped off her chair and ran towards the intruder with a wild shout of joy.

"*Daddie!*"

Mr. and Mrs. Satterthwaite sprang up from their seats, turned to see a youngish man, clad in an ill-fitting lounge suit, standing in the doorway. The young woman clutched at the back of her chair, her eyes wide in terror.

"Harry!" She breathed the cry almost voicelessly in her stupefaction. "*Harry's ghost!*"

Satterthwaite snatched back the child, who had recoiled from the flaming anger in the stranger's face.

"What does this mean?" asked the intruder, fiercely, ignoring the little one. "Evelyn!" The summons was uttered with outraged, but confident, authority.

She shrank back, covering her face.

"No!" She spoke as to herself. "No! It can't be! He's dead—he's dead!"

Satterthwaite intervened, his jaw setting hard, the level tone of his voice evidently sternly controlled.

"May I ask who you are?" he inquired, coldly.

The stranger faced him. Anger met anger in their eyes.

"Certainly. I am Harry Tremaine. And perhaps you will be good enough to tell me who the devil you are—and what you are doing with my wife in my flat?" The man's voice trembled with fury. His face worked with passion. He took a step towards the young woman.

She drew quickly away from him, sheltered herself behind her companion, whence she stared at him with fascinated eyes.

"My name is Satterthwaite—and I am dining with my wife!"

"Your—wife——!" He repeated the words slowly, as though scarcely crediting such audacious impudence of assertion. Then he laughed in harsh mockery. "Don't talk nonsense!" He looked down at the child at Satterthwaite's side. "Dorothy! Come here!"

Satterthwaite restrained the child's movement of obedience with a firm grip. "Excuse me," he said, quietly, "I think the youngster is better absent from this discussion." He led the bewildered little girl to the door, opened it, and called for the nurse. "Put Miss Dorothy to bed," he ordered. "And then all of you go out for the evening. Go to the movies. Here!" He held out a note. "Have a good time—and get out at once. Mrs. Satterthwaite and I want to be alone in the flat this evening."

He closed the door and returned to the others. The stranger, dominated for the moment by his quiet, masterful manner, had made no movement to interfere, stood, as he had left him, by the doorway. But his eyes were fixed still wrathfully upon the young woman, who stared back at him, fascinated, clutching at the table for support. Her lips were ashen, parted in a soundless terror.

Satterthwaite turned to her.

"Do you know this man, Evelyn?"

She made an effort, answered:—

"It—it is Harry—or his ghost!"

The stranger laughed in bitter scorn.

"What foolery! Don't pretend I died since yesterday!"

Amazement came into both their faces.

"Since yesterday?" they repeated, in one bewildered echo.

The stranger frowned.

"What is there strange about that?" he asked, irritably, impressed, nevertheless, by their evidently genuine astonishment.

"Where—where were you yesterday, Harry?" asked the young woman, unsteadily, as though scarcely daring to probe some awful mystery.

He laughed shortly, in impatience.

"Why, of course——" he began, in confident tones. He stopped, a baffled look suddenly in his eyes. "Of course——" he began again, less confidently. Then he gave it up. "I—I can't remember—it's funny! I can't remember where I was yesterday." He bit his lower lip, looked around him slowly with bent and puzzled brows, plainly uneasy at this unexpected forgetfulness. "But of course I must have been here!" He put an end to his embarrassment by dogmatic assertion.

Satterthwaite contemplated him for a moment with eyes that searched him to the depths.

"H'm!" he said, meditatively. "There's something extraordinary about this. Won't you sit down, Mr. Tremaine?" He pointed to a chair. "Let us discuss this matter amicably—it's not so simple as you think, and hostility won't help us."

Tremaine hesitated a moment, a flicker of

angry revolt in his eyes. But there was a note in Satterthwaite's quiet tones which more than invited compliance, and he seated himself in the chair with a shrug of the shoulders which justified him to himself.

"This is my flat—and my wife," he said, "anyway!" The assertion sounded curiously weak.

The young woman watched him speechlessly.

Satterthwaite caressed his chin with that little gesture which was habitual to him when commencing the cross-examination of a witness. He began in the suave, deliberate tones familiar to the Courts.

"What is the last thing you can remember, Mr. Tremaine?" he asked.

Tremaine stared at him.

"I—I think——" he began, hesitatingly, almost automatically responsive to Satterthwaite's seductive voice. Then he stopped, the baffled look again in his eyes.

"What the devil has it got to do with you?" he demanded, in exasperation.

Satterthwaite was unruffled.

"It has a great deal to do with me, Mr. Tremaine," he said, "and with all of us here. So please try to answer my questions."

Tremaine's eyes blazed at him.

"What right have you to question me? What are you doing here at all, that's what I want to know?"

Satterthwaite soothed him with a gesture.

"We're coming to that presently. Answer my questions now—and afterwards you can put any questions to me that you like. Now—try and remember."

"SATTERTHWAITE SNATCHED BACK THE CHILD. 'MAY I ASK WHO YOU ARE?' HE INQUIRED, COLDLY. 'CERTAINLY. I AM HARRY TREMAINE. AND PERHAPS YOU WILL BE GOOD ENOUGH TO TELL ME WHO THE DEVIL YOU ARE -AND WHAT YOU ARE DOING WITH MY WIFE IN MY FLAT?'"

Tremaine relapsed sullenly. It was evident that he was secretly conscious of the inferiority in which his absence of memory placed him. His eyes sought the young woman as though to elicit some key-point of remembrance, but came back empty.

"Well?" he said, with suspicious ill-humour.

Satterthwaite was courtesy itself.

"Now, think! Carry your mind back. You were in the Army, weren't you?"

"Of course!"

"You remember that—perfectly?"

"Yes—of course I do!" His tone was impatient.

"Good! You remember being in France?"

"I should think so!"

"In what part of France were you last?"

"In the Argonne."

"Right! Now—when did you leave France?"

Tremaine hesitated, bit his lip. The eyes went blank again.

"I—I can't remember."

"Do you remember leaving France at all? Do you remember the voyage?"

There was a silence whilst Tremaine evidently made an effort of memory.

"No," he said at last. "I cannot remember it."

"Ah! Now, what is the last thing you can remember in France? You were in the trenches, I suppose?"

"No—we had left the trenches behind us. We

were fighting in the forest—I can remember that—a sort of ravine with splintered trees. We were attacking——" A new note of interest came into his voice, a satisfaction at recovering these memories. "By George, yes! Of course, there was a terrific attack on—we were going for the Kriemhild Line. What happened——" He hesitated. "I was running forward—the Boche was shelling like mad." He seemed to be visualizing a scene, his face screwed up, his eyes narrowed, his lower lip between his teeth. "I saw a whole bunch go down—and then——" he stopped.

"And then?"

"A sheet of flame. I—I can't remember anything more. I—I must have been hit, I suppose."

"I see. Now, can you remember what you were wearing just then?"

"I was in shirt and breeches. My tunic had been torn off the day before—breaking through the undergrowth. I remember that perfectly."

Satterthwaite nodded.

"And your identity disc?"

"I'd lost that the day before also. I remember thinking I should have to get a new one."

Satterthwaite smiled.

"We're coming to it," he said, encouragingly. "Now—just before you came into this flat, where were you?"

"In a tram-car. I got off at the corner in the usual way, and let myself in with my key."

"You had that key in France, I suppose?"

"Yes; I had it with a few others on a ring in my breeches-pocket. I kept it for the day I should come back."

"Quite. Now—before you got into that tram-car, where were you? Where had you been?"

Tremaine hesitated again.

"I can't for the life of me remember! I—I sort of woke up in that tram, as if I had been to sleep on my way home. I remember looking out and thinking to myself, 'Of course, that's where I am—nearly home.' It seemed quite natural."

Obviously, the man himself was puzzled. There was a short silence, and then Satterthwaite spoke again.

"And you remember nothing of what you did between the day you attacked the Kriemhild Line and finding yourself in that tram-car?"

Tremaine frowned in a desperate effort to collect his thoughts.

"No," he said at last. "It's an extraordinary thing, but my mind seems a complete blank."

"Can you remember the date of that attack upon the Kriemhild Line—the day you saw that sheet of flame go up?"

"October 10th," came the reply, without hesitation.

"What year?"

"1918, of course."

Satterthwaite smiled.

"Do you know what year this is?"

The other stared at him, a sudden fear in his eyes.

"Not 1919?" he cried. "Don't say I've lost a year!"

"1920!"

"Good God!" He jumped up, gripped in a panic that drove the blood out of his face, and switched round to his wife. "Evelyn! Where have I been? Haven't I been here all this time?"

She took a deep breath.

"I see you to-day for the first time since you sailed in April, 1918, Harry," she said, steadily.

He stood swaying on his feet, hand pressed to his brow, through a long moment of realization. No one spoke. Then he dropped his hand, turned to his wife again.

"And you? When"—he indicated Satterthwaite with a helpless gesture—"when did this happen?"

She met his eyes bravely.

"I married—Jack—a year ago to-day," she answered. The effort of her speech was obvious.

"But you couldn't!" he exclaimed. "It's bigamy!"

Satterthwaite went, without a word, to the escritoire standing in a corner of the room, and took out a paper. He came back with it, handed it silently to Tremaine. It was an official War Department notification.

Tremaine stared at it.

"My God!" he muttered, appalled.

"You are dead, my friend!" said Satterthwaite, grimly. "Killed in action, October 10th, 1918."

Again there was a long silence. Tremaine sank heavily into a chair, stared straight in front of him. An expression of combativeness came slowly into his face, his jaw set. At last he uttered an aggressive grunt.

"Well, I'm not!" he said. "I'm very much alive. So that's that! Whatever has happened, I've come back. This is my flat—and my wife and child. And you can clear out just as soon as you like!" His eyes flamed hostility as they met Satterthwaite's. "Quit!"

His wife sprang forward.

"Harry!" she cried, imploring she scarcely knew what.

He turned to her.

"I'll talk to you presently," he said, in a voice of smouldering resentment. "I'm not blaming you—but I think you might have waited a bit. We'll square this out by ourselves when he's gone."

Satterthwaite smiled, and his smile was by no means acquiescent.

"I guess you'll have to wait for that, Mr. Tremaine," he said, in even tones that had an edge to them. "I'm not going just yet."

Tremaine glared up at him.

"What?" he cried, incredulously.

"I'm not going," repeated Satterthwaite. "You don't realize the situation, my friend. This woman has been living with me for a year as my wife I do not propose to make her name a public scandal. Officially, you are dead. Well—remain dead."

Tremaine laughed mockingly.

"And leave you my wife, my child—all this!" He waved his hand round the flat. "Thank you!"

Satterthwaite shrugged his shoulders.

"I'll buy your property of you at your own

valuation. Your will has been proved. The amount of your estate, plus interest, shall be refunded to you. I'll give you, in addition, any reasonable amount as compensation. You are the victim of circumstances, my friend—but, as a straight man, there's only one thing for you to do. You can't ruin this woman's life!"

Both men, following their thought, turned to glance at her. She stood tense, deathly pale, looking from one to the other, evidently in an atrocious dilemma, unable to utter a word.

Tremaine swung round again to his rival, sneered scornfully.

"What kind of a fool do you take me for? Do you expect me to give up my wife and child, my home—give up my whole existence and pretend to be someone else—just to oblige you? You must be mad! I've come back, and here I am—come to stay!" he ended, doggedly. "To pick up my life again."

There was a shade of sympathy in Satterthwaite's eyes as he contemplated him.

"But can't you see that it's impossible to pick it up again where you left off?" he said. "Can't you see that as Harry Tremaine you can never be happy again? You can't get away from what has happened—it will always be there, haunting you—and you'll be reminded of it—pointed at. The other women will make your wife's life a hell in the thousand little subtle ways they have. And besides, *what have you been doing for the past two years?* You've been living somewhere—as somebody. That existence will always be waiting in the background, ready to spring out on you—and you can't guard against it, for you don't even know what it was."

The young woman bent forward.

"Can't you remember, Harry? Can't you think where you've been—what you've been doing?" she asked, anxiously. "Oh!" she added, with a little despairing gesture, "I only want to do what is right—what is best for all of us."

Tremaine shook his head.

"I haven't the remotest idea of where I was at lunch-time to-day," he said. "I may have come straight out of hospital, for all I know."

Satterthwaite nodded, humouring him.

"You may, of course," he said. "But it's

"HE JUMPED UP, GRIPPED IN A PANIC THAT DROVE THE BLOOD OUT OF HIS FACE, AND SWITCHED ROUND TO HIS WIFE. 'EVELYN! WHERE HAVE I BEEN? HAVEN'T I BEEN HERE ALL THIS TIME?'"

highly improbable. Two years is a long time to stay in hospital. Almost certainly you have been living somewhere, in new relationships. Be reasonable, my friend. Can't you see that the only thing is to sell out to me, and clear off—go right away—start a fresh life ? "

Tremaine revolted.

" I'm hanged if I do ! " he replied. " Right is right—you can't get away from it. I'm Harry Tremaine—and I've come back to my wife and child—to my own existence—and I've got a right to them ! " He rose from his chair. " Enough of this talk ! I'm master in this flat—and I give you time just enough to pack up your traps. Get a move on ! " His voice quivered with an anger he instinctively accentuated as a protection against the other man's arguments. " I want to be alone with my wife ! Get out ! " He moved forward menacingly.

Satterthwaite did not stir.

" I think not," he said, steadily. " Not like that."

Tremaine's anger flamed up in him.

" Get out—or I'll throw you out ! "

Satterthwaite smiled.

" If you wish to fight for her——? " he said, grimly inviting.

With a savage snarl Tremaine tore off his coat. His wife sprang forward in terrified appeal.

" Harry ! "

He flung her off brutally.

" Stand out of this ! " he said. " This is a man's fight ! I'll deal with you afterwards ! "

An atmosphere of primitive passion filled the room. She cowered away, watching the protagonists with fascinated eyes, like a squaw for whom two braves unsheath their knives. Both were big, powerful men. Satterthwaite made no move, while Tremaine flung aside his coat and rolled up his shirt-sleeves—but his eyes were warily alert and his fists clenched massively at the end of the arms held loosely ready for sudden action.

With a savage bellow of maddened hatred, Tremaine rushed at him blindly. Satterthwaite's right arm jerked up to guard, and like lightning his left fist shot out from the shoulder, crashed full between his adversary's eyes. Tremaine went over backwards, arms in the air, his head striking the table with an impact that shattered glass and crockery, rolled over to the floor. He lay motionless.

His wife had darted to his side, bent over him.

" Oh, Jack ! " she cried, looking up to the victor. " You haven't killed him ? "

Satterthwaite bent over him also.

" No," he said. " Get some water."

She took the jug from the table, and Satterthwaite splashed his face. Tremaine drew a difficult breath, opened his eyes, looked up and around him, dazed.

" TREMAINE WENT OVER BACKWARDS. HIS WIFE DARTED TO HIS SIDE, BENT OVER HIM.

"Where am I?" he asked, feebly.

"You're all right," said Satterthwaite, bathing away the blood which trickled down his nose. "Don't worry."

Still half-stunned, the stricken man made an abortive, ill-co-ordinated effort to rise.

"Here, let me help you," said Satterthwaite "Get into this chair." He lifted him up, supported him to a big armchair by the fireplace, deposited him in it.

"Thanks," said Tremaine, feebly. "Extremely good of you." He looked around him with vacant eyes. "Where am I? What happened? I—I was in a tram-car——"

Satterthwaite shot a swift glance of intelligence to the young woman who was, after all, his wife as well. She drew near, her breath held at a sudden possibility, her eyes searching the face of this man who but a moment before had so uncompromisingly claimed her. Had he——?

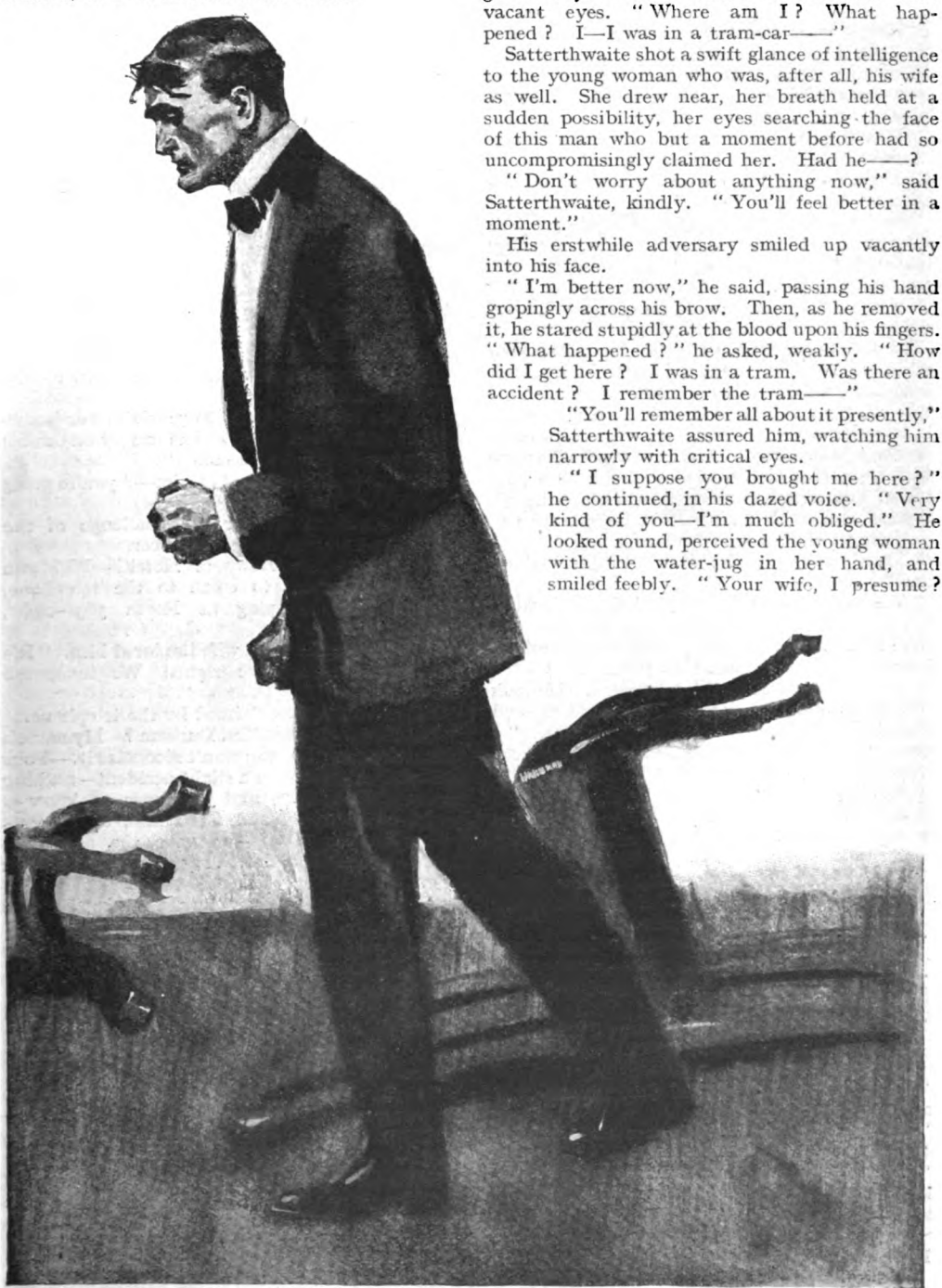
"Don't worry about anything now," said Satterthwaite, kindly. "You'll feel better in a moment."

His erstwhile adversary smiled up vacantly into his face.

"I'm better now," he said, passing his hand gropingly across his brow. Then, as he removed it, he stared stupidly at the blood upon his fingers. "What happened?" he asked, weakly. "How did I get here? I was in a tram. Was there an accident? I remember the tram——"

"You'll remember all about it presently," Satterthwaite assured him, watching him narrowly with critical eyes.

"I suppose you brought me here?" he continued, in his dazed voice. "Very kind of you—I'm much obliged." He looked round, perceived the young woman with the water-jug in her hand, and smiled feebly. "Your wife, I presume?



'OH, JACK!' SHE CRIED, LOOKING UP TO THE VICTOR. 'YOU HAVEN'T KILLED HIM?'"

I'm very sorry, madam," he added, politely, " to put you to so much inconvenience."

She stared at him for a moment as though suspecting his sincerity, and then turned away her head, a wild expression in the eyes that sought Satterthwaite's face. He signalled back discretion.

" Here's your coat," he said, holding it out. " Let me help you on with it."

Tremaine gazed at it, obviously puzzled, and then glanced down to his rolled-back shirt-sleeves.

" Was there a row, then ? " he asked, mystified. " A fight ? "

" There was a little trouble," conceded Satterthwaite.

" And you took me out of it, I suppose ? " he said, with genuine gratitude. " I am exceedingly obliged to you, sir—going to this bother for a complete stranger."

" Not at all—not at all," said Satterthwaite, easily. " Here, let me help you."

The assistance was accepted. Tremaine rose shakily to his feet, stood docilely while Satterthwaite guided his arms into the sleeves of his coat. There was a curiously subtle difference in his expression ; quite another, a gentler, more courteous personality looked out of those features which were Tremaine's, with a placid smile such as Mrs. Tremaine had never seen. Close though his head was to Satterthwaite's, he evinced not the slightest sign of recognition.

" Thank you, sir," he said. " I'll get along now."

" Where do you live ? " asked Satterthwaite, with a veiled glance at the young woman.

She held her breath, on this opening threshold of the mystery of the past two years.

" At the Newport Hotel," he replied. He took a few steps and then stopped, his hand pressed to his brow. He turned to Satterthwaite. " I wonder whether you would mind my sitting here a little longer, sir ? " he asked, apologetically. " I still feel somewhat faint and dizzy."

" By all means," replied Satterthwaite. " You are quite welcome to stay until you are recovered."

The young woman marvelled at the quiet self-control of his voice. She felt as though she must shriek to break a nightmare.

" You are very kind," he said. " I am afraid my wife will be anxious about me——"

His wife ! The young woman choked back a cry. *His wife !* Then——?

" Is it too much to ask if you would telephone to her, sir ? " he continued. " She would come and fetch me."

" Certainly, I will," replied Satterthwaite, his face an impassive mask.

" My name is Durham—Room 363 at the hotel."

" Right. Come and sit down in here." He led the way into the adjoining drawing-room. " Make yourself comfortable whilst I ring through to Mrs. Durham."

He hospitably settled his guest in the most luxurious chair of the elegantly-furnished room, and then went out, closing the door after him.

His wife was awaiting him outside. Her face was white. Her eyes, preternaturally large, implored him. She clasped her hands tensely against her breast.

" Oh, Jack ! " she cried, her voice nevertheless held too low to be overheard. " We can't let him go like that ! It is Harry—after all ! "

He moved forward, and she followed him to the telephone.

" It is Harry all right," he agreed. " It's clear enough what has happened. He was shell-shocked. The hospital authorities found nothing on him by which to identify him. No one happened to recognize him. When he recovered consciousness he thought he was someone else—was, in fact, someone else. There are half-a-dozen cases on record, to my knowledge—cases that have nothing to do with the war. Dissociation of personality is the technical term for it. He just ceases to be Tremaine—and becomes Durham, with all its implications."

" But, Jack," she expostulated, " we *know* he's not Durham ! "

He shrugged his shoulders as he lifted up the telephone-receiver.

" What good will it do to proclaim our knowledge ? " he asked. " It insists merely on double bigamy—smash-up all round "

" Then "—she clutched at him—" you're going to——"

He turned to answer the challenge of the telephone-operator, gave a number.

" Halloa !—The Newport Hotel ?—Will you ask Mrs. Durham to come to the telephone, please ? She's staying at Room 363—right, I'll hold on."

" Jack ! Jack ! " his wife implored him. " It's not right—it *can't* be right ! We must tell her ! "

His attention was claimed by the telephone.

" Halloa ! Is that Mrs. Durham ? My name's Satterthwaite : no, you won't recognize it.—Your husband has met with a slight accident—nothing serious. He's here, and he wants to know if you'll come round and fetch him, as he feels rather shaky. Yes "—he gave the address—" yes—ground-floor flat. Very good. We'll expect you."

He put up the receiver, turned to his wife with a grim smile.

" Now we shall see what Harry's other choice is like," he said.

She was not to be diverted.

" But, Jack, you'll tell her ? You *must* tell her ! " she implored.

He looked her full in the eyes. His voice was grave.

" Evelyn, are you tired of our life together ? Do you prefer him to me ? "

She turned away her head, with a hopeless gesture.

" Oh, don't ask me ! Don't tempt me ! I don't want to think of myself—I only want to do what is right. And how can it be right to—to let him go away like a stranger from all that was his ? "

He laid his hands upon her shoulders, forced her gaze to meet his again.

"And is it right, Evelyn, to break your life, to break my life, to break this woman's life—to put Harry himself into an impossible position—out of a quixotic regard for pure ethics?"

"Oh, I don't know!" she said, shaking her head in mental anguish. "I only know that he's Harry—and that we're disowning him."

"But he does not know he is Harry Tremaine—he's quite content to be Durham."

"And if he wakes up again and remembers?"

He shrugged his shoulders.

"Wait till it happens. We can only deal with the actual situation. At the present time he's quite happily Durham. Now, dear"—he smiled affection—"trust me. Leave it all to me—just keep quiet." He kissed her on the brow. "It will all work out."

She turned away, shuddering.

"He was my husband," she said, drearily.

"He *was!* And your husband was killed in action on October 10th, 1918. The man in the drawing-room is a complete stranger of the name of Durham. Now, let us go in to him."

She resigned herself, with one last protest.

"I don't like it, Jack. I won't promise. Right is right."

"In this case it is wrong! Come!"

He led her back to the drawing-room. Their visitor rose politely from his chair.

"Don't get up," said Satterthwaite. "Your wife is coming along."

"HARRY TREMAINE'S TWO WIVES ENTERED TOGETHER: THE ONE BEAUTIFUL, REFINED, EXQUISITELY DRESSED; THE OTHER COMMONPLACE, DOWDY, THE CHEAPLY-ATTIRED PRODUCT OF A CHEAP CITY SUBURB."

"Thank you," he replied. "It is very good of you to take so much trouble. I shall be quite all right when my wife arrives to take charge of me." He smiled in half-serious self-depreciation.

The three of them sat down. The Durham personality was amiably loquacious. The young woman watched him speechlessly, noting, with an icy chill at her heart, a hundred little familiarities of gesture as he sat in that old familiar chair all unconscious of any previous presence in it.

"I'm very muddled still," he confided. "I can't remember anything since being in that tram. The row, whatever it was, is a complete blank to me—I can't imagine even how I got into this street. Extraordinary, isn't it?"

"Very," agreed Satterthwaite, coolly.

"It's not the first time I've had a lapse of memory like this," he went on. "A shock does it. I went through the war—and—would you believe it?—I woke up one day in hospital utterly unable to remember anything about myself except that my name was Durham! I couldn't remember where I came from—nor whether I had any relatives—couldn't remember anything except just my name. And—this is the strange part of it—I never have remembered. They discharged me from hospital—shell-shock it was—and I just started life afresh." He smiled confidingly at the young woman. "I sometimes wonder whether I was married before, madam—but I hope not. I couldn't part with the wife I've got. I married her eighteen months ago and she's everything to me. Idon'tthinkthere's another woman like her in the world? And she feels the same about me. That's the right sort of married life, isn't it?"

He waited for her agreement. Her tongue seemed to be sticking to the roof of her dry mouth. She could only nod, speechlessly, and try to smile. Something seemed to be crying out in her: "Harry! Harry!" Another part of her consciousness prayed desperately for guidance. Should she—could she—ought she to speak—to break this pathetic little idyll he sketched for her?

She looked curiously at his clothes. They were cheap and ill-fitting, frayed at the trouser ends. So different from the spruce Harry she had known!

As though something of her thought had communicated itself to him, he clapped his hand suddenly to his breast-pocket, fished out a wallet, glanced into it, put it back.

"Whew!" he breathed in deep relief. "I had a nasty turn—thought perhaps I had lost that in the row. It contains all I own in the

world." He smiled. "It's all right, though." He glanced around him appreciatively. "But it wouldn't buy the things you've got in this room, all the same. I admire your taste, if you'll pardon my saying so, madam. I'm glad my wife is coming round—I'll show her the sort of drawing-room we're going to have some day, when we've made good."

His cheerful smile was heartbreaking. She felt as though she must jump up and run across to him, shrieking that it was his—all his! That he and she had bought it all together, every bit of it. And yet she could not stir.

Satterthwaite sat apparently unmoved, but his jaw was set hard.

"Perhaps you'll come in for a legacy some day," he said, casually.

His wife glanced at him, reading his thought. Of course, Jack would not do anything mean, would compensate him somehow! She was suddenly very grateful to him. The idea of a future anonymous restitution lightened her conscience a little.

"It's not likely," said their visitor, indifferently. "We have neither of us any relatives—my wife and I. And I don't care so long as I've got her. When we get some youngsters we shall be the happiest family going!" He smiled—and she thought of Dorothy, peacefully asleep in the other room.

The door-bell rang, and, with an enormous relief, she sprang up to answer it. Anything to put an end to this torture! For one moment, in the hall, she hesitated.

"Help me—help me, O God, to do what is right!" she prayed in dumb agony. And the question came up inexorably before her, vast, overpowering, not to be solved. Right!—what was right? She opened the door.

An insignificant-looking little woman of the lower middle-class stood on the threshold, nervously agitated, her eyes wild with alarm.

"My husband?" she asked, breathlessly. "Mr. Durham?"

"He's here," replied Mrs. Satterthwaite, coldly. "This way."

She led her to the drawing-room, and Harry Tremaine's two wives entered together: the one beautiful, refined, exquisitely dressed; the other commonplace, dowdy, the cheaply-attired product of a cheap city suburb, good-hearted vulgarity in every line of her. Mrs. Satterthwaite looked from the man who had been her husband to the woman who was now his wife—and her heart turned suddenly to stone.

"Here is Mr. Durham," she said. With something of a shock, Satterthwaite admired her consummate ease of manner.

The little woman had rushed forward.

"Oh, Ed! Ed!" she cried, ignoring Satterthwaite, who stood up politely. "What is the matter? You're not hurt? Not badly?"

"I'm all right, dear," he said, embracing her. "I'll tell you all about it presently. These kind people took me in and looked after me."

She turned to them.

"Oh, thank you so much!" she said, effusively. "It *is* good of you! And I don't know what *would* have happened if anything serious had gone wrong with Ed to-night. You see, we're sailing for Buenos Ayres to-morrow. And he's got such a good post—an agency—and if anything had prevented his going——"

"Never mind that, my dear," said Durham, cutting short her loquacity. "These kind people do not want to go into our private affairs. Come along. I've inconvenienced them enough already." He held out his hand to Mrs. Satterthwaite. "Good-bye, madam—and many thanks."

She looked him in the eyes as she took his hand. They were the eyes of a stranger.

"Good-bye, Mr. Durham," she said, and turned away.

Satterthwaite escorted the couple to the door.

"Your hat is here," he said, as he took it off the clothes-peg where Tremaine had hung it. "Good-bye. Good-bye, Mr. Durham. What boat do you sail by to-morrow?" The inquiry was in the most casual tone of courteous interest.

"The *Manhattan*."

"Pleasant voyage—and good luck to you both!" he said, cheerily, and closed the door. He stood for a moment listening to their happy voices as they went out of the building, and then turned to find his wife standing by his side.

"Jack!" she cried, and her eyes searched his face as if to read acknowledged partnership in a crime. "He's gone?"

He nodded, smiling at her.

"Gone right enough—and he'll get his legacy. I can trace him quite easily now we know the name of his boat. That gives us a clear conscience."

"Does it, Jack? Does it? Oh, I wish I could be sure! Durham is not the man Tremaine was!"

"He's a happier man than Tremaine would be, anyway. Think of their delight when they get that legacy!" He led her back into the dining-room, where the remains of their anniversary feast were yet upon the table. "And, dear"—he looked into her eyes—"we are happier people than we should have been had Durham not replaced Tremaine."

She shook her head, still doubtful.

"But if he remembers?" she queried.

"He goes a long way off, into a new environment. The chances are against his remembering at all. If he does"—he shrugged his shoulders—"he will probably himself put it down as a hallucination, from which his devoted little wife will nurse him back. Don't worry, my dear. We did the right thing."

"If only I could be sure!" she said, with a sigh.

The next morning Dorothy woke up to see her mother bending over her bed.

"Where's dada, mummy?" she asked.

"Dada?" said Mrs. Satterthwaite, as though she did not understand.

"Yes," said the child, "Dada—dada who came back last night!"

Her mother shook her head, smilingly.

"You dreamed it, dear," she said. "Dada was killed in the war."

SOME NOVEL CHRISTMAS GAMES

THE "SENSE OF SMELL" COMPETITION.

Small numbered bags, each containing a familiar essence, herb, spice, or other commodity possessing a distinctive scent, are suspended across the room. Each competitor is handed a card and instructed to write, against the number of each bag, whatever he or she believes it to contain, judging only by the sense of smell. The person whose card bears the greatest number of correct solutions is the winner.

THE BLINDFOLDED TEAM RACE.

The course is formed by a number of cylinders of paper (or mineral water bottles will serve), arranged vertically at intervals to form a winding pathway (see diagram). Ladies are divided into pairs, blindfolded, and "harnessed" by means of ribbons tied to the outer arms. A gentleman takes the reins and tries to guide his team along the course without knocking over any cylinders. Teams run consecutively. The time is carefully noted, and five seconds are added for every cylinder dislodged.

THE FAN RACE.

Coloured discs of tissue paper, about four inches in diameter, are placed in a line, and each competitor is handed a fan of a colour corresponding to her disc. On the word "Go!" ladies attempt to fan their discs past the winning-post—a chalk line at the opposite end of the room. Considerable amusement is caused by the confusion which arises from the mixing of the discs.

MR. BALLIOL SALMON'S CHARMING SKETCH OF GIRLHOOD.

The Charm of the Sketch

"SKETCHING," it has been said, "is the sport of the painter." By sketching, of course, must be understood the making of little bits of pencil or brush work at odd moments in a spirit of irresponsible enjoyment, the unconsidered trifles of an artist's leisure. The "details" more or less elaborately made by an artist in preparation for the painting of a picture are sometimes spoken of as "sketches." But the word thus used is a usurper, and should properly be replaced by "studies," which suggests an amount of thought and deliberation that are quite incompatible with the true sketch. This is the product of no mature consideration or careful plan, but rather of an impromptu impression and a playful fancy. Being the outcome of enthusiasm, its freshness and verve often render a sketch, despite its imperfections, more pleasing than a finished work. Gathering together in these pages the flotsam and jetsam of a few artists' studios, we can better realize the charm of the sketch (restricting ourselves to colour-sketches), its spontaneity, gaiety, and freedom from all apparent effort.

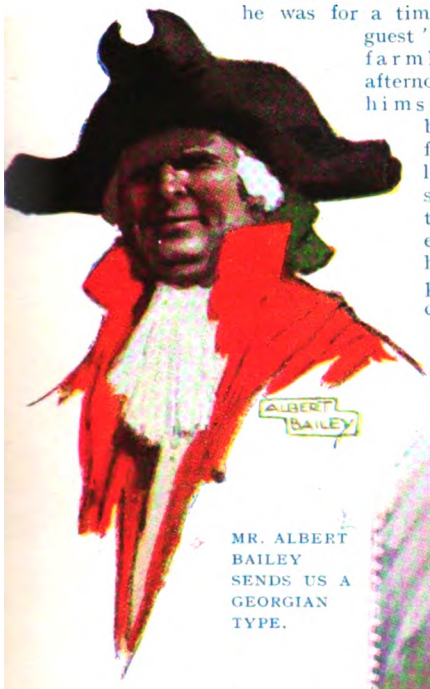
MR. DUDLEY HARDY CONTRIBUTES A DESERT SCENE.

Most artists have at one time or another found the "sport" of sketching irresistible. Given a brush or pencil at hand and the desire

MR. FRANK GILLETT'S SPORTING NOTE.

MR. HARRY ROUNTREE CALLS HIS SKETCH, "TIME I WAS IN BED, WHAT?"

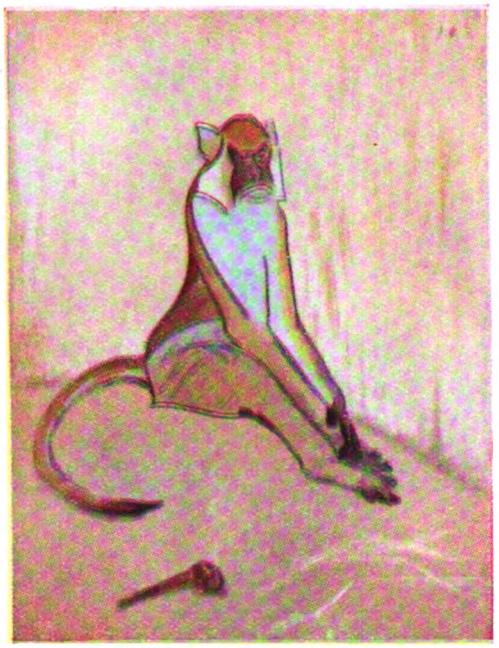
to use them under almost all conceivable circumstances was not to be overcome. Many stories of famous painters could be told in illustration of the fact. One of the best relates to Sir John Millais. In his early manhood he was for a time a "paying guest" in a Surrey farmhouse. One afternoon he found himself weather-bound in the farmhouse parlour, and was soon suffering terribly from ennui. He had his brush and palette but no canvas or paper on which to employ them. Looking round the room, his eye espied the smooth white surface of a cupboard door. Capital! In less than half an hour the door was adorned by a coloured sketch—some passing fancy of the artist's mind. But when the farmer's wife came in to lay the tea she was horrified, and angrily demanded that Millais should restore the immaculate whiteness of her cupboard door.



MR. ALBERT BAILEY SENDS US A GEORGIAN TYPE.

Just at this moment the arrival of the vicar's wife created, like the blowing of the cornet-horn in "David Copperfield," "a seasonable diversion." That lady, learning what was amiss, showed both appreciation of the charm of the sketch and ready resourcefulness in an

MR. HERBERT PIZER'S SKETCH FOR PORTRAIT OF HIS WIFE.



MR. J. A. SHEPHERD
CALLS THIS "NEVERMORE!"

emergency by offering at once to buy the door in exchange for a new one and a rich Indian shawl she was wearing. The transaction was carried through to the complete satisfaction of all three parties, but unfortunately there is no record of the subsequent fate of Millais's sketch, which ought, in poetical justice, of course, to have been sold eventually at Christie's at a price that vindicated the memory of the vicar's wife as an art critic.

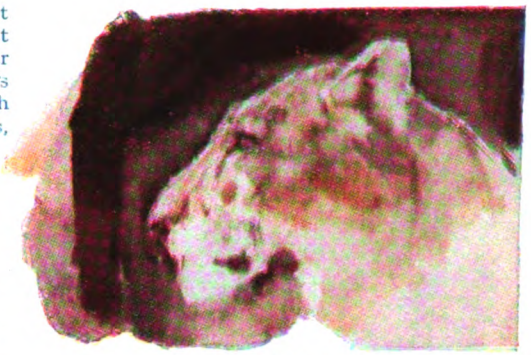
At Newman's, the artist's colourman's in Long Acre, they will tell you how the late J. M. Swan, R.A., would sometimes jot down an artistic idea on a drawing-block or anything else which might be handy whilst waiting at the counter for the packing of a parcel or the procuring of small change. One of these impromptu sketches is reproduced in this article, the subject, the head of a tiger, having all the virility, if not the finish, of one of the pictures of wild animals for which Swan became famous. The artist was almost a daily visitor to the Zoo, and this little sketch was probably the result of a momentary impression gained in passing through the Gardens on his way to Newman's shop.

MR. WILTON WILLIAMS'S
SNAPPY LITTLE STUDY.

MR. GILBERT HOLLIDAY'S CLEVER REPRESENTATION
OF ATMOSPHERE AND MOVEMENT.

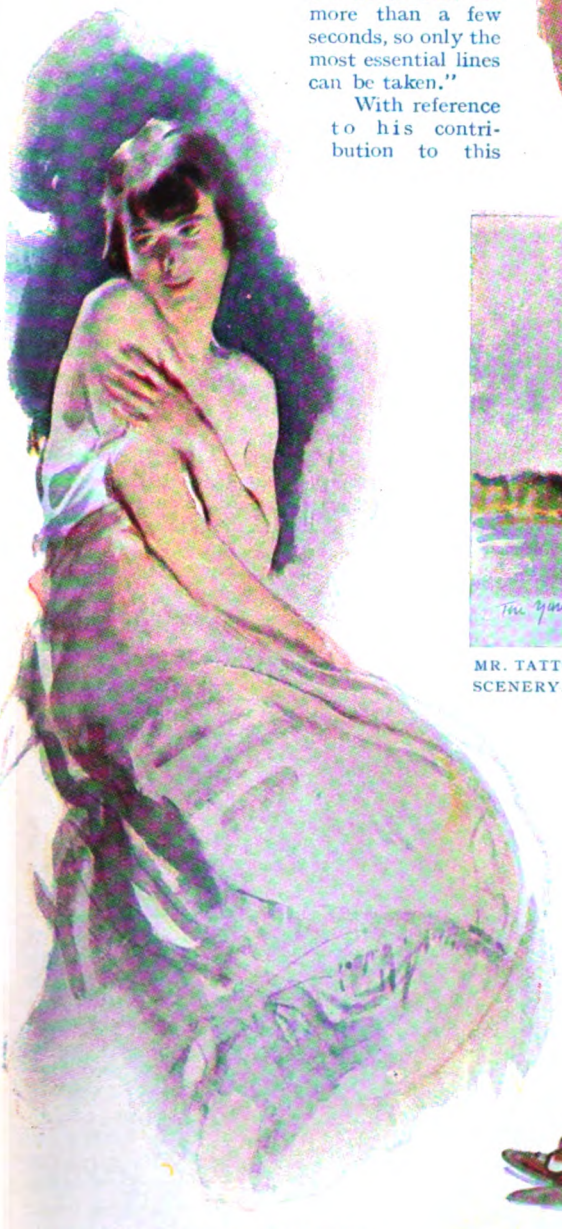
Mr. J. A. Shepherd's sketch will also suggest the "Zoo." It was done, however, not at Regent's Park, but in the Giza "Zoo," near Cairo. "The fed-up pose of the monkey," says the artist, "suggested the pipe. The sketch was direct from life, no details added afterwards, and only took a very few minutes to make. One has to be hasty in making studies from monkeys, as they are never still for more than a few seconds, so only the most essential lines can be taken."

With reference to his contribution to this



THE LATE MR. J. M. SWAN, R.A., IS REPRESENTED BY THIS SLIGHT SKETCH OF A LIONESS.

MR. TATTON WINTER'S LITTLE IMPRESSION OF BROADLAND SCENERY.



MR. W. E. WEBSTER'S SKETCH IS REMARKABLE FOR ITS SIMPLICITY, FEELING, AND BEAUTIFUL COMPOSITION

MR. J. H. THORPE IS HAPPIEST WHEN PORTRAYING COSTUME SUBJECTS.

MR. WILMOT LUNT GIVES US A SKETCH IN CHALK AND WATER-COLOUR.

MR. BARRIBAL IS A PAST-MASTER IN THE HANDLING OF THE COLOUR SKETCH.

MR. LIONEL EDWARDS'S RAPIDLY-LIMNED IMPRESSION OF A RACING SUBJECT.

article, Mr. Tatton Winter says: "I find it most difficult to put into words why I did this or any other sketch. All I know is that I make a sketch from an emotional point of view with the intention of getting a suggestion, more as a stimulant for the imagination, and such sketches I find the most helpful. I never make a sketch as a picture."

Mr. Tatton Winter means, I suppose, that he never makes a sketch for the purpose of converting it into a picture. But other artists sometimes make sketches simply as sketches, which afterwards prove to be the starting-point of more or less important pictures. Millais's masterpiece, "The Huguenot," had its origin in the picturesque wall of an old country house of which he happened to make a sketch in the course of an autumn holiday. Harry Rountree did the sketch which appears in these pages because he chanced to see a particular bit of green near his semi-rural house at

Southall and was "much taken with the possibilities of the fine blending of this with blue." But when this "colour note" appeared in his sketch all its bigger possibilities revealed themselves to him. And so, he adds, "I intend to make a page-drawing of this scheme as soon as I get time to enjoy myself. But as the peculiar qualities of the blue and the green used will not be got in your article, this won't be very convincing to your readers."

In a similar way, it seems, Mr. Dudley Hardy's example of the charm of the sketch has proved the forerunner of a picture which our readers may possibly see in next year's Royal Academy. On the other hand, Mr. Wilmot Lunt confesses that his sketch was "done for amusement only, and is merely the note of an impression of some passing fancy." Mr. Albert Bailey was experimenting with a new paper when his charming little sketch was evolved, whilst Mr. Wilton Williams made his sketch in order to pass the time on a Sunday morning when, as he says, "I should have been at church—or golf."

"For Sale," Mr. Frank Gillett's contribution to this article, "is a little reminiscence, done the same evening, of a day with the Henham Harriers. The field," explains Mr. Gillett, "was mainly composed of men and women out to see hounds work, but there was a regular 'varminty' horse dealer's labourer riding a powerful, stout chestnut colt which he had to hold in all day. I don't know that there is anything much to say about it, except that a ray of sunlight, towards the end of the afternoon, lit up the head of the horse and bits of the ground and gave me the idea for the drawing." This evanescent little bit of sunlight evidently came just at the psychological moment to provide the colour for Mr. Gillett's sketch. It was gone again in a moment or two, and its charm could only have been caught by an artist's quick eye.

It will be observed, perhaps, that the "note" of Mr. W. H. Barribal's sketch is simplicity. "In my art," he remarks, with reference to the sketch, "I strive to depict any object of beauty I select by a setting which avoids confusion. To my mind and eye the art embodied in the setting, say, of a Russian ballet is irritating and disconcerting, showing about as much of the art of selection and exclusion as is seen on an ice-cream barrow. I am speaking broadly. The mixing of colour is as bad as the mixing of one's drinks—both produce 'effects.' To my mind there is more beauty in one single flower, isolated or grouped with others of its kind, than in the most elaborate flower show."

As to the remaining sketches appearing in these pages, few words need be said—they practically explain themselves. Mr. Balliol Salmon's girl's head is characteristic of the easy, facile way in which he can depict the charm of femininity. In his early days he had the advantage of using as models the two beautiful Dare sisters, who frequently sat for him in a friendly way. Mr. H. Pizer's contribution will have an added interest when it is mentioned that the sketch is for a portrait of his wife.

Mr. Gilbert Holliday and Mr. Lionel Edwards have hit upon similar subjects. The finish of a horse-race has often been placed upon canvas, but seldom has the intense effort put forth by animals and men been as vividly suggested as in Mr. Holliday's little sketch. Mr. Edwards, who is an adept at rapid workmanship, shows us the horses, with their jockeys, parading for the start, probably sketched direct on the course; for a few minutes' sketch, the clearness of its detail must be noted as truly remarkable.

Before the war Mr. W. E. Webster was acquiring a considerable reputation as an interpreter of the beauty of womanhood, and his charming sketch suggests that his military service has not weakened his skill. Mr. J. H. Thorpe's figure sketch will attract attention for its easy and natural pose.

At the Langham Sketch Club the "artist's sport" has been systematically encouraged and pursued for the past fifty years or more. On certain evenings it is the rule of the club, to which many "rising" painters of the day always belong, that the members present should each make an extempore drawing—a sketch, that is to say, on some subject announced at a moment's notice, within the space of two hours. The object of the rule is recreation, and it is in this spirit that the members carry out their self-imposed task, as is proved by looking at the sketches that, having been presented to each other, may be seen hanging in members' studios. Nevertheless, on some occasions these extempore sketches have blossomed into important pictures, making turning points in the careers of distinguished artists.

Thus it was that Sir Edward Poynter's "Israel in Egypt" came into being, the picture which first secured him recognition as a painter of great power. Two of Mr. Frank Dicksee's most celebrated pictures, "Harmony" and "The Symbol," were similarly the outcome of impromptu sketches at the Langham Club. And doubtless others could be mentioned as showing that the sketch can have not only charm at the moment of its making, but also value in the development of an artist's career.

FOR IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT—

"The Uncrowned King of Arabia"

SEE BACK OF FRONTISPIECE.

The RESCUE of ORMISTON

by CHARLES GARVICE

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK WILES

THE generality of authors, like the conies, are, if not exactly a feeble, a shy and timid folk. Gerald Ormiston was, physically, too strong to be timid—he was quite a decent boxer, and could do wonders with a pair of sculls and heavy weights—but it cannot be denied that he was shy; nevertheless, it is to be hoped fervently that the reader will not jump to the conclusion that he was that favourite object of the popular imagination, "a strong, silent" man. It is true that Ormiston was not given to words, that he could sit for a whole evening, pulling at a hideously strong pipe and contributing only a nod and a smile as his share in the conversation; but he could talk when he felt like it, which, it must be confessed, was seldom.

At one time he had threatened to become that long-suffering and much-abused creature, a popular novelist, and during this period he acquired, if not the millions which are attributed, alas! fabulously, to the successful fictionist, a nice little sum which prudently he had invested in gilt-edged securities, thus, as he hoped, barring effectually the door against that animal dreaded by all literary men, the wolf who proverbially is waiting round the corner of their humble cottage. But of late he had strayed from that primrose path and had sought a flintier way: the critics said that his work had improved. I'm not a critic, so I don't know whether they were right or wrong.

Gerald did not seem to mind the decrease in his royalties; in his most flourishing times he had stuck to his modest chambers in Gray's Inn, and he continued to live his simple life. The chambers consisted of a small and somewhat grimy room in which the dust accumulated, with infrequent dispersions, on a litter of books and the other material which is necessary to an author's calling. He lived in this room and slept in another one on the storey above. Mrs. Jinks, who "did for him," came every morning at nine o'clock and pretended to clean and tidy up, while he went for a walk or sat under the elms of the Inn, smoking his pipe on either occasion. He wrote with a pen and his copy was sent to a typewriting establishment. For friends, he had those members of the Scribblers' Club who were congenial to him; he avoided what is called "society," led the "uneventful" life, permitted himself, every year, a month's sea-trout fishing in Scotland, and asked one thing only of the gods—the strength of mind and body to continue his work.

One day, these gods, who had granted his prayer for some years, changed their minds and gave him a pain in the chest, which he accepted with exemplary patience until it became so bad that it interfered with his blessed work. He spoke of it to a doctor friend, who promptly assured him that he was not facing the interesting death of a consumptive, and that the trouble was caused by leaning over his writing desk.

"You writing chaps *will* press your chests against the edge of the table, and the more interested you get, the harder you press. Oh, I know!" He was impolite and unsympathetic enough to punch Ormiston in the refractory chest and to add, "You silly old ass, why don't you get a secretary and dictate to a typewriter?"

Ormiston was appalled, for he hated the idea of a secretary, and his shyness loathed the thought of dictating; but, like most of us, he had to work, so he inserted an advertisement of his requirements and stated carefully that all applications were to be by letter. Two mornings afterwards there was a portentous pile of epistolary applications on his table. He opened, say, a dozen of them, got so confused by the number, and the fact that every applicant appeared to be the very person he wanted, that he abandoned the attempt at a decision and chucked both the opened and unopened letters

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into the waste-paper basket, as long as it would hold them.

Half an hour afterwards, as he sat in his chair—of course, smoking—and staring at a half-written sheet of copy paper—he had had another try at writing, and the pain had swooped down upon him promptly—there came a knock at the door, and on his surprised, "Come in,"—surprised, because Mrs. Jinks was not due until the following morning, and few persons visited him in his work hours—a young girl entered, or rather, stood on the threshold. She was a very small girl, almost fairy-like in her dimensions and her delicacy of form and features; and her face, which was a pretty one, was rendered distinctive by a pair of dark grey eyes which indicated an intelligence beyond the ordinary. She regarded the "well-known author" with a timidity and shyness which paled to insignificance compared with his. When he had got over his astonishment, Ormiston rose slowly to his substantial feet; but she was the first to recover and speak.

'You are Mr. Ormiston?" she said. Ormiston nodded, and she continued in a low voice which Ormiston thought very pleasant: "I am afraid you think I am intruding. I have come about the advertisement ——"

'Look here," he broke in with a kind of shy reproach, 'I said 'by letter,' you know——"

"I know," she said pleadingly; "but I was sure that you'd have so many applications——"

"There were two million three hundred thousand," murmured Ormiston, almost piteously.

"I knew there would be!" she said, triumphantly. "So I thought I would venture to call. I tried writing, tried ever so many times, but never seemed able to say just what I wanted. It is very good of you to see me." It occurred to Ormiston that he had not had any option, but he didn't say so, and motioned her to a chair.

She seated herself, a dainty, graceful little person, her eyes fixed on his face with an expression which revealed a burning anxiety to impress him. She had read that in interviews of this kind, brevity was absolutely imperative, so she began, as if she were making a statement before a magistrate:—

"My name is May Denison. I am an orphan and am living with an aunt—at least, I did; I am in lodgings now. I can read and write French and Italian; I mean well. I know a little of German and Spanish——"

"Scandinavian?" asked Ormiston, with a gentle irony which she took seriously.

"No; I am sorry; but I think I could soon pick it up."

"No, no, don't trouble," said Ormiston, discomfited by the failure of his jest.

"I have a good speed at shorthand; and a much better one at typing. I am quick at correspondence, and can collect data at the British Museum. I can also read proofs, unless there is much Latin and Greek in them."

Overwhelmed by the recital of these accomplishments, Ormiston drew his huge hand across his brow and for a moment or two gazed at her eager little face silently; then he said:—

"When on earth did you find time to get all this? You look——"

"I'm nearly twenty-three," she said, anxious to dispel his idea of her juvenility. "My father was a professor at Aberdeen."

"That accounts for your monstrous mentality," said Ormiston. "The Scotch—I beg your pardon, the Scots—always romp in where brains are concerned."

"Oh, but he wasn't Scotch," she said, reluctantly.

"There goes your only excuse," said Ormiston, reproachfully.

"Well, shall I do?" she asked, trying to mask her anxiety.

"Oh, you'll do all right," he said; "the only thing against you is that you know so much that I am afraid of you."

"There is nothing to be afraid of," she assured him, with the first smile: it pleased him as much as her voice had done. "Here are my references." She placed some letters on the table, and Ormiston affected to read them; affected only, for he hated reading letters, and he had made up his mind.

"All right," he said. "Can you come at once? I am in the middle of some stuff I promised to finish——"

"I could come to-day," she said, looking round the room, "but you have no typewriter, have you? Could you get one by to-morrow?"

"No; but you could," said Ormiston. "You can go and buy one—here, I'll give you a letter: tell them to charge it to me. Get the one you're used to."

"What time shall I come to-morrow?" she asked, putting the note in the inevitable bag.

"What time would you like——? I mean, come at ten o'clock. The Djin—Mrs. Jinks—is generally finished by then."

"And—and the salary?" she asked.

"Eh?" said the absent-minded Ormiston. "What would you like? I mean, what do you think—what do you expect?"

"Would two guineas a week be too much?" she asked, rather timidly.

Ormiston had once lived on less than that sum, and he knew what that "living" meant.

"Say three," he said. "You're too young to die of starvation." She laughed at this, a little laugh which trilled like a bird's note through the dusty room.

"At ten o'clock, then," she said. "Good morning, Mr. Ormiston." She opened the door; then, looking over her shoulder, said gravely, almost rebukingly, "How do you know that those references are not forged?"

"I don't know, and I don't care," said Ormiston. "If they are, it only proves that you have added another accomplishment to the awful list. Besides, I might find it useful: you never can tell."

The next morning, Ormiston returning, a few minutes after ten, from his usual walk, found Miss Denison seated before the brand-new typewriter which, like a piano-player, she was "trying over." Dainty and refreshing as she looked, he regarded her with a dismay which

her bright but demure "Good morning, Mr Ormiston," did not altogether dispel. He surveyed her and the typewriter ruefully, shyly, grunted and took out his tobacco pouch; then greater dismay fell on him: perhaps she objected to smoking! With that appalling feminine intuition which makes the smallest and the feeblest of her sex a thing of terror to us men, she divined his dread and said:—

"I don't mind; I like it; my father smoked all the time."

"Thank Heaven! All good men do—smoke all the time, I mean," he said. Apparently satisfied with her "trying over" she leant back and eyed him waitingly.

"Do you suppose I am a kind of machine, like that blessed thing there, and that I can begin dictating like—like pumping water?" he said, rumpling his red hair despairfully. "I told you I'd never done it before——"

"Why not try dictating some answers to those letters?" she asked, nodding at a pile on his table.

"Never answer letters," he replied. "Always wire or 'phone: saves time."

"I am sure I could take them down quicker than you could 'phone," she said, encouragingly.

He grunted again, tore open some of the envelopes and dropped the contents on her table.

"Why, they are nearly all of them charity appeals!" she said.

"Send the first one a guinea and chuck the rest away." He was turning over the other letters impatiently, and his irritation seemed to increase as he came upon a violet envelope, bearing an American stamp and addressed by a woman's hand. This letter he thrust in the pocket of his disgracefully shabby jacket. "Oh, here's one you can answer," he said, taking up another letter. "It's from a modest young person saying she's sending me the MS. of a novel—only a hundred and ninety thousand words!—and asking me to read it at once, to give her my candid opinion of it and to find a publisher—also at once."

"What shall I say?" asked Miss Denison.

"Oh, tell her to go to the de—— That won't do?" Miss Denison had a speaking countenance. "Well, tell her I shall be delighted, that I am never so happy as when I am reading untried authors' works; in fact, that I've retired from the literary trade and do nothing else. You might add, if you insist on being truthful, that no editor cares a blow for my opinion, that every editor is always on the lookout for new work and that he'll be sure to read it—or some of it—without any incitement by me." It was an unusually long speech for Ormiston, and he sank back in his chair exhausted and smoked furiously and aggrievedly

Clack-clack, went the machine, and almost in the twinkling of an eye she handed him a beautifully-typed letter. He read it and nodded approvingly. It was a charming little paraphrase of his sarcasm; a letter that would cause the unfledged authoress to declare to the end of her days that Mr. Ormiston was the most helpful, sympathetic, and great-hearted of all literary men. He tossed it back with a laugh that was intended to conceal his admiration. Then he got up and walked about like our friend the old lion at the Zoo, rumpling his hair, and glancing at her every now and then, apprehensively, almost resentfully.

"'HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT THOSE REFERENCES ARE NOT FORGED?' 'I DON'T KNOW AND I DON'T CARE,' SAID ORMISTON."

Meanwhile she had slipped a sheet of copy paper, carbon and duplicate, into the machine, carefully avoiding looking at him.

"Here, let's have a try!" he said in a tone of desperation, and he took up the point of the novel at which he had failed yesterday.

For the first half-hour he was in an agony; he sweated inwardly and outwardly; he felt as if he could not compose a sentence, the clack-clack, the din of the infernal machine, the subdued ting of its horrible little bell, were maddening; he put in wrong words, repeated sentences, forgot names, and felt that his brains were clogged with wool. But the girl took no notice of his distress and perturbation, and never lifted her eyes from the typewriter; her skilfully-simulated ignoration of him gradually soothed the wretched man; and presently, to his amazement, he found himself forgetting her and the machine and dictating with comparative freedom.

Soon, he realized the advantages of this mode of working; there was no pain in the chest, no reaching for the ink—he used a fountain pen, but, of course, he never filled it—and he discovered that while she was taking down one sentence he had time not only to form the next but to reform it, if it needed it; and he lost all

sense of time until, happening to glance at the clock, he saw that they had been at work two hours.

"Here, that will do," he said. "I should think you must be precious tired."

"Not at all," she said, brightly. "You have done awfully well for the first time."

"Have I?" he said, gratefully. "Well, we won't urge the willing horse. That's enough for to-day. You can go. Take your doll or your hoop, whichever is in fashion, and play in the park. I'll go down to Thames Ditton and have a row this afternoon."

She rose, hooded her machine, seemed to hesitate, then said:—

"You will be away all the afternoon, Mr. Ormiston?"

He nodded. She put on her hat and jacket, said "Good morning," and went out. When she had disappeared, Ormiston took the violet letter from his pocket, read it, sighed, coughed, as if he were ashamed of the sigh, and sat for some little time, staring at the carpet moodily.

When he entered the study, after his trip on the river, he looked about him with an air of confusion: something was wrong with the room, its aspect was different from that of the morning. What had happened was that Miss Denison, by some extraordinary lure, had already won the good-will of Mrs. Jinks, who, of course, had regarded the intrusion of this "young person" with distinct disfavour. Miss Denison had not only won her over, but had induced her to help in really cleaning and tidying up the room. As he surveyed its unwonted cleanliness and order, Ormiston remembered that every now and then, during the morning, Miss Denison's eyes had wandered round, and that she had permitted herself an almost imperceptible shudder. Now, he had grown so accustomed to the dust, the grime and the litter, that for a moment or two he didn't know whether he liked this cleansing of the Augean stables; but presently, as he leant back in his chair, he saw that it was good, and a sense of hitherto unknown comfort stole over him.

Next morning he remarked to her, as she entered:—

"You must have been pretty hard at work yesterday afternoon. I think I told you to go and play."

"I'm sorry," she said; "but no right-minded woman could play with such a room on her conscience. No one is obliged to eat his peck of dirt every day."

"That's not original," he grunted.

"I know," she said; "but it's sound sense. Besides, it will be easier now for me to keep the room decent: of course, I shall dust and tidy up every morning. Shall we take the letters first?"

After a time, they fell to at the proper and important work. It came easier to-day, they were able to work in the afternoon for a short time, and when she went she left quite a nice lot of "draft" for him to correct. As the days passed, Ormiston grew more and more accustomed to his secretary. He found that he not only did his work with greater ease, but that he did a great deal more with the aid of the machine than with the pen: correcting typewriting is quite a pleasant occupation compared with the revising of his kind of handwriting, which resembled the footmarks of a spider escaped from the inkpot. Besides, like most literary men, Ormiston had his fits of laziness, periods during which he would rather have swept the roads or cleaned boots than compose; but in the presence of that patient, dainty little girl-woman, he felt ashamed to indulge this laziness, and rarely, if ever, refused to come to the call of her "Shall we begin on the copy now, Mr. Ormiston?" with the result that his bank balance grew and his publishers were at peace.

One morning, in the absorption of his work, he slipped his unextinguished pipe into his pocket, and did not notice the mistake, though the smell of burning was pungent enough to cause Miss Denison to cough.

"Why, good gracious, you have set yourself on fire!" she exclaimed.

"Eh?" he responded, confusedly. "Confound it, how did I manage that! Never mind, it's not much of a hole," he added, unconcernedly, as he lit up again. "Where were we? Oh—'He could not see her face, for she had turned to the window'—Righto"; and off he went again.

When the day's work was done, she remarked, casually:—

"You'd better give me that coat, Mr. Ormiston, and let me see if I can mend it."

"Oh, it doesn't matter," he said, indifferently; but she had taken a little "house-wife" from her pocket and deftly threaded her needle; so, grudgingly, he took off the coat and, as he walked up and down, watched her diminutive fingers as deftly she darned the hole. "I wish you wouldn't bother," he said. "It's only an old coat."

"It is," she said, eyeing the garment critically, not to say distastefully. "Well, why do you wear it—haven't you any other?"

"Why does the miller wear a white hat? Any other? I don't know; I dessay." His eye followed hers as it wandered over the remainder of the suit, the baggy trousers, the crinkly waistcoat, turned up at the corners, and lacking the top button.

"I should find out," she said. "There isn't any reason why you should wear shabby clothes. Oh, I beg your pardon, Mr. Ormiston."

"That's all right," he said; "but I've got used to these old togs—Lord knows how long I've had 'em!—and they're precious comfortable."

All the same, that evening he dug out a somewhat fresher suit, and he was aware that on her arrival Miss Denison regarded it approvingly. That afternoon, it struck him that his necktie, with which, until now, he had been absolutely satisfied, was faded and frayed, and that his hair wanted cutting; so he hied him to a hosier's and a barber; and again he had the satisfaction of noting Miss Denison's approving glance.

One day he was hunting for some notes, with all a man's impatience and irritability when he is searching for anything, and in five minutes he

had turned out and upset drawers and created a litter about him which caused Miss Denison so much distress that she exclaimed :—

"Oh, don't bother. Let me look for it."

"All right," he said. "I'm ready to take my oath that I put the wretched thing in one of these drawers. I'll run out and get some bacca while you're looking for it."

In the act of searching the drawers, she came upon an unframed cabinet portrait; it was that of an extremely fair, fluffy-haired, and rather good-looking girl. Miss Denison would not have been a woman if she had not felt interested and curious in this presentment of one of her sex. She regarded it intently, and for a moment she was half conscious of a kind of shock, as she thought that it might be the portrait of—of someone in whom Mr. Ormiston was greatly interested, in short, his *fiancée*; but, with a sense of relief, she came to the conclusion that he would not be likely to thrust the portrait of the girl to whom he was engaged into a drawer amidst miscellaneous rubbish; rather, that he would have sported it triumphantly on his mantelshelf; and, of course, in an expensive frame. She concluded also that the unknown lady must be his sister. And yet—well, there was a touch of commonness, not to say vulgarity, about the face which that of Mr. Ormiston, though plain enough in all conscience, did not display.

With a little frown she pushed the portrait back into its place, and soon after she found the sheet of lost notes amongst a pile of papers on his table which, try as she would, she could not induce him to keep in order.

That afternoon she seemed, for the first time, a little off colour, as Ormiston would have phrased it. She was compelled to ask him to repeat some sentences, and she made several mistakes in her typing. At last this, on occasions, most unobservant of men, noticed that she was not up to her usual mark, and said, abruptly :—

"Here, I say, I'd forgotten that I've got a Committee meeting at the Scribblers'; we must chuck it for to-day." To give body to his false excuse, he caught up his hat and bolted out, as if he were late.

Miss Denison hooded her machine; but when he had gone, she took off the cover and set to work to retype the faulty places. Every now and then she paused, sometimes stared straight before her, and once leant her head on her hand, as if the former were aching. Now and again she glanced towards the drawer which enshrined the portrait of the fluffy-haired young lady; and presently, as if there were something fascinating in the object, she went to the drawer and regarded the picture with a growing disfavour for the soulless eyes and loose, smirking lips. "Not a bit like Mr. Ormiston," she argued: but then brothers and sisters were often very much unlike. She was putting on her hat and coat and was making for the door, when it was flung open, a voice cried, "Are you there, Gerry?" and the original of the portrait stood on the threshold.

"Halloa!" cried the visitor, in the brassy voice which is one of the characteristics of a fifth-rate actress. "Where's Gerry? And, I say, who are you?"

"You mean Mr. Ormiston?" said, almost faltered, Miss Denison. "He is out, and will not be back for some time."

"What a beastly nuisance!" exclaimed the young lady, disgustedly. "He couldn't have got my letter telling him that I've come by an earlier ship. And you say he's not likely to be back soon? What a bore! You didn't tell me who you were," she added, regarding Miss Denison with open scrutiny, not altogether free from suspicion and dislike.

"My name is Denison; and I am Mr. Ormiston's secretary," May informed her.

"Oh, that's all right," said the fluffy-haired one, with a little air of relief, tinged with disapprobation. "Well, look here, will you tell him that I've gone down to the agent's; but that I'll come back? No, here's a better stunt! Tell him he can dine me at the Troc; I'll meet him there at seven—sharp."

"Very well," said Miss Denison, in a matter-of-fact tone. "What name shall I say?"

The fair one regarded her with a mixture of resentment and satisfaction.

"Oh, he won't want to know my name," she said. "But you can say 'Peggy,' if you like. Ta-ta!"

When "Peggy" had gone, Miss Denison seated herself and looked hard at the opposite wall. Was it possible she could be his sister? She rose and was about to go when she remembered that she had promised "Peggy" to deliver a message. In preference to sitting there and waiting an indefinite period, it would be better to leave the message for him at the Scribblers'. She was just leaving, when in came Ormiston.

"Halloa, you here still?" he said. "What's the matter? Aren't you well, anything happened? There wasn't any Committee meeting for to-day: my mistake."

"I'm quite well, thanks," she replied, trying to speak casually and pleasantly; "and nothing has happened except that a lady has called; she asked me to tell you to meet her at the Trocadero at seven to-night—sharp." For the life of her, she could not help the addition of the word. "Her name is—Peggy."

He stopped short on his way across the room and looked over his shoulder at her; his jaw had dropped, his thick, sandy brows were drawn together in a frown.

"Peggy! Lord, I forgot!" He met her eyes; the expression in them was curious, though she tried to seem indifferent. "She's the girl I'm—I'm engaged to." Miss Denison's silence seemed to irritate him. "I suppose you think I might have told you. Well, I didn't! Fact is," he rumpled his hair, took a turn across the room, then dropped into the chair at his table and continued, while he sought, or pretended to seek, for a paper. "Oh, well, I suppose I had better tell you. Fact is, I met Peggy—her name is—or isn't—Montmorency. She's in the Chorus. She was having a bad time; her father was a drunken beast; dead now, thank Heaven;

"SHE WAS PUTTING ON HER HAT AND COAT, WHEN THE DOOR WAS FLUNG OPEN AND A VOICE CRIED, 'WHERE'S GERRY? AND, I SAY, WHO ARE YOU?'"

brother bullied her; wretched life for a girl. We saw a good deal of each other and—oh, I was a silly ass, of course. That's the story She got an engagement in America: seems to have struck oil there. I say, I wish you'd say something, instead of standing there like a stuck pig! I beg your pardon! I mean, you might wish me happiness and—and—all that."

"Of course I do, with all my heart," she said, promptly, too promptly. "And I don't know why you should have told me; it is no business of mine."

"That's so," he said, morosely; "only we've been—sort of pals. Good afternoon."

Miss Denison was rather pale when she arrived next morning; but apparently she was in extraordinary good spirits; in distinct contrast with Ormiston, who was grumpy, short of temper, and much depressed. While they were at work, or rather, while they were attempting to work, Miss Montmorency entered. She, like Miss Denison, appeared to be in buoyant spirits; and she burst in like a vision—er—a somewhat overdressed vision: the colours on her made Miss Denison blink and Ormiston frown.

"Halloa, here you are!" she exclaimed, as she went to Ormiston, put her arm round his neck, and kissed him. "Hope I'm not disturbing you two busy bees. We had a lovely time of it last night, Miss—sorry, but I've forgotten your name—Oh, ah, yes, 'Denison.' Almost as good a dinner as they give you in old New York. Quite the long-parted loviers, weren't we, Gerry? I say, 'spose you're too busy to come and help me buy some things? You will? Righto! Run away and get some glad rags on; couldn't think of going out with you in those togs."

"Very well," said Ormiston, resignedly, and carefully avoiding Miss Denison's eyes, though they were fixed on the typewriter.

When he had left the room, Miss Montmorency, flinging herself into the armchair, and displaying a liberal quantity of silk stockings, yawned openly and, with as open a tolerance, said:—

"Dear old chap, Gerry! But a bit of a slow-coach. What? I shall have to wake him up when we're married." She gave a sigh, a sigh of noble resignation. "Did he tell you that I'd knocked 'em over there? Right between the eyes; they're real mad about me; offered no end of engagements." There was a pause, in which Miss Denison murmured, "That is very nice; I congratulate you."

"Thanks!"

Another pause, then she said with an affectation of casualness, "How's he doing? He used to make a pot of money at one time; then he fell off; got on to a new stunt which didn't pay so well. I shall have to talk to him, get him on to the old lines; won't do for Peggy Montmorency's husband to be a back number.—Is that the best you can do, Gerry?" she asked, not too pleasantly, as Ormiston appeared in an old blue serge suit. "Well, come along. Ta-ta, Miss—Denison! Sorry to interrupt; but I dare say you can find something to do."

"Don't wait," said Ormiston, gruffly. "Take the day off."

It looked as if Miss Denison would be able to take many days off; for every morning or afternoon Miss Montmorency "blew in," to use her own phrase, and carried Ormiston away from his work; and, in his intervals of freedom, Ormiston was unable to settle down: Miss Denison grieved over the loss of copy. Perhaps his incapacity to work was why he looked so worried, not to say unhappy.

There were times when the two ladies were alone, and on these occasions Miss Montmorency never failed to refer to her great success in America, and to hint that she was making a great sacrifice in marrying a man in Ormiston's position, and she showed an inclination to resent Miss Denison's lack of sympathy and an appreciation of Miss Montmorency's self-sacrifice.

With regret, it must be stated that Miss Denison, who was a really good-natured, warm-hearted girl, grew to hate Mr. Ormiston's *fiancée;* and as her secretarial services appeared to be no longer needed, she began to think of "handing in her resignation." On the morning she had decided to do so, Ormiston came in very late. He was looking even more worried and unhappy than usual; so much so, that she said:—

"If you don't feel inclined for work this morning, I will correct that last batch of proofs."

"Eh?" he said, absently. "Oh, well, I don't feel up to form this morning. Fact is," he added after a moment and in a tone of great depression, "I've had rather a nasty blow. Did you ever hear of the Great Wheal Excelsior Gold Mining Company?" She shook her head. "Don't suppose you have; and I wish to Heaven I hadn't! A friend of mine—save us from our friends: apt quotation—one of the directors of the beastly thing, persuaded me to go in for it—on the ground floor. It's bust, bust completely, and I've lost all my little savings; all my pretty chicks in one fell swoop."

Miss Denison said not a word—with her lips; but eyes can speak, and hers were eloquent enough.

"Thanks," he said. "Knew you'd be sorry. But what about Peggy? I say, you're always so—so kind and obliging. I wish you'd tell her."

"Me!" Oh, accomplished Miss Denison, where was your grammar?

"Yes; I've an idea that she will take it better from you. No! I'm a coward: too much to ask you."

"No"; she said, promptly. "I'll do it."

"You will! Awfully good of you! But you *are* good—always! Look here, she's due. I'll clear out. Yes; I'm a low, mean coward; that's what's the matter with me."

For some minutes after he had gone, Miss Denison sat, pondering; and when Miss Montmorency "blew in," the other girl was ready for her.

"Yes; Mr. Ormiston has gone out," she said, "on important business. He is in great trouble. Did you ever hear of the Great Wheal Excelsior Gold Mining Company, Miss Montmorency? I am sorry to say that Mr. Ormiston has invested all his money in it, and that it has bust." She found a certain pleasure in using his own vulgar word. "He asked me to tell you."

Miss Montmorency went white below her artistically-applied rouge, then a brilliant crimson.

"Asked *you*——! Of course, he did; he's too ashamed to tell me himself. Lost all his money! Well, I always thought he was a fool, and now I know it. And me, with my prospecks! It's disgraceful! I don't know how he can expect me to stand it. If he ain't going down the hill now, he will be before very long, and—— Tell you what, Miss Denison, it's a sheer take in. And me tied to a man of his sort, a regular rotter! Really, I don't know what to say. I must go and think it over. Tell him that I'll come in again—or write."

"Surely," faltered Miss Denison, whose face was very pale, "surely, now that he's in trouble, you won't——"

"Oh, I'm so flustered and knocked over that I don't know what I'm going to do. Of course, I've got to consider my prospecks, my future. Here, I must get outside. If I waited till he came in, I should give him a bit of my mind and I hate a row."

She wrote—and quickly. The letter arrived by hand in the afternoon of the same day. Miss Denison was reading proofs, Ormiston was fidgeting about the room, smoking furiously, his hands thrust in his pockets. He took the note from the page-boy of the Actresses' Social Club and, having read the brief epistle, exclaimed devoutly, "Thank God!" and threw up his hands towards the ceiling.

"Here, read that," he said, dropping the letter in front of his secretary. "She has chucked me."

"And you're glad?" said Miss Denison in a low voice: she had declined to read the letter.

"Try and find a better, stronger word," he said, with a laugh that had a touch of wildness in it. "Of course I'm glad. And you know it."

"I—I——?" she faltered.

"You know it," he repeated. "You know I wasn't in love with her. I suppose I never was. Anyway, I haven't been for a long while. Because I've been in love, am in love, with another woman."

"I—I don't think you ought to tell me all this," she informed him.

"Whom else should I tell?" he demanded, staring at her frowningly, almost indignantly. "You know well enough that you're the woman."

He glared at her almost fiercely; she tried to keep her eyes on the typewriter; but they refused to obey her, and slowly she raised them and met his gaze. The next instant he had caught her up, as if she were a bundle of feathers, and held her tightly in his arms.

"Put me down," she murmured. But her arm stole round his neck and her head nestled on his shoulder.

I might add, for those readers who may be curious, that Ormiston is still going strong, and shows no sign of becoming a back number; and that Miss Montmorency, though she is now one of the most brilliant stars in the theatrical, terpsichorean heavens, sometimes wonders, when she hears of Ormiston's modest triumphs, and catches a glimpse of him and his radiant wife in the stalls, whether she was not too hasty on a certain occasion.

"THE NEXT INSTANT HE HAD CAUGHT HER UP AND HELD HER TIGHTLY IN HIS ARMS."

ACROSTICS.

WITH Acrostic No. 73, printed below, our thirteenth series of six acrostics begins. Prizes to the value of twelve guineas will be awarded to the most successful solvers.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 73.

The latter read, the former you may guess.
May both increase the season's happiness.

1. Insect and edge will county indicate.
2. Take either North or South—United State.

3. Adornment for the finger, nose, or ear.
4. The last of twenty-four should now appear.

5. Canal. Reversed, was worshipped by the Greeks.
6. Name of a Jewish month the solver seeks.

7. Club for the player, for the worker ore.
8. Pointed and round; one, and a hundred more.

PAX.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 74.

These, if proverb tells us true,
Worms successfully pursue.

1. Meditation on the tide
Little word will soon provide.

2. Baba, not the woolly brand,
Overthrew the robber band.

3. Despot, emperor, or king.
Take this means of measuring.

4. Little word for little boy,
With a head is full of joy.

5. This, like silence, gives consent;
Affirmation, too, is meant.

PAX.

Answers to Nos. 73 and 74 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on December 11th.*

The answer to each acrostic must be on a separate piece of paper; a second solution (if desired) may be sent to any light, and should be written at the side; at the foot of their answers solvers should write their pseudonyms and nothing else. These pseudonyms should in no case exceed one word.

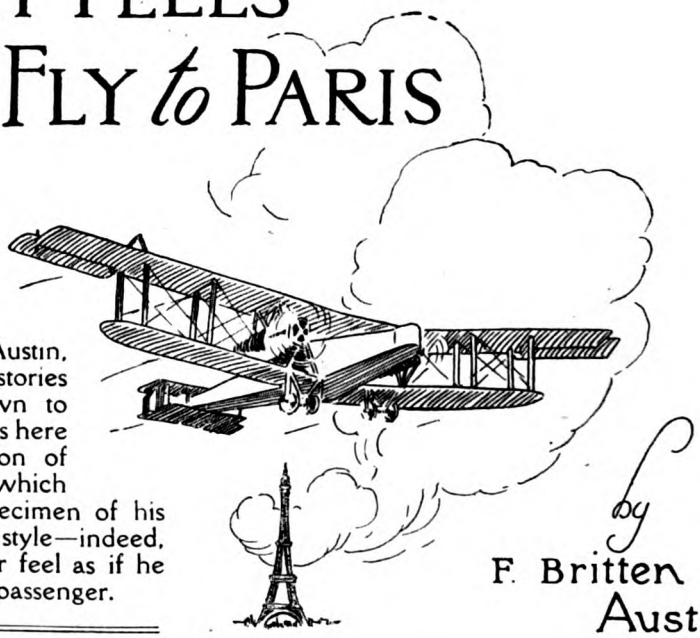
ANSWER TO No. 72.

1.	A	rithmeti	C
2.	N	i	L
3.	T	ishbit	E
4.	O	ww	O
5.	N	ga	P
6.	Y	sici	A
7.	A	mazemen	T
8.	N	e	R
9.	D	airym	A

NOTES.—Light 2. Nil, nothing; found in "juvenile" and "senile." 3. Elijah; fish bite. 4. The wowwow, or gibbon; Gibbon, "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." 5. Seringapatam. 6. Physician. Every man is a fool or a physician at forty. 7. The last word of the Marriage Service. 8. Uncle of Saul. 9. Dairyman; a myriad.

"Maribo" and "Masnedo" are accepted for the "Malmo" light.

How it Feels to Fly to Paris



Captain F. Britten Austin, whose splendid stories are so well known to STRAND readers, has here written a description of his flight to Paris, which is an admirable specimen of his vivid and graphic style—indeed, it makes the reader feel as if he himself were a passenger.

by F. Britten Austin

ONE may doubt whether M. Blériot, on that fine summer morning when he snatched at his opportunity of calm skies and flew—the first of all men—across the sea from France to England, realized that in a little more than a decade what was to him a glorious venture would be, to the man of business pressed for time, the almost commonplace method of travel. Adventure is with us but a short while in our modern world; the track of the bold pioneer becomes the everyday route of thousands, ignorant of the perils originally to be surmounted. And now, vastly extended though it is at both ends, the route of the first cross-Channel airman has become one of the regular highways of the world's communications.

The Handley-Page machines have accommodation for ten passengers and their luggage, parcels, and mail. Their twin 350-h.p. engines drive them through the air from London to Paris in from three and a half to four hours.

I bought my ticket at the office of the first *exclusively aircraft* brokers to be established in the world—the Lep-Aerial Travel Bureau, Piccadilly Circus, London; obtained my passport, procured the French *visa*—which is one of the irritating legacies left to us by the Great War—and started for my journey with considerably less sense of adventure than on that day I should have experienced had I been setting out by rail from London to Plymouth, for England was then in the paralysis of a railway strike. The air-traveller is independent of signalmen and platelayers.

The Handley-Page machines are housed at Cricklewood, but they fly to Hounslow, the terminus of the Continental air route, and there pick up their passengers. By a misunderstanding I was directed to Cricklewood, where, fortunately, I arrived before the machines had left.

Two of them were flying to Paris that day. They lay in the open beyond the vast hangars, their enormous dark-green wings outspread, emitting from time to time a deafening whirring roar that flattened the grass behind them in the wind of their propellers as their engines were tested, like two monstrous birds yet tethered but impatient for the flight. Mechanics crawled over them, making final adjustments. The pilots in their flying gear—ex-Service men both of them—came across the ground and climbed up into their cockpits, one pilot and a mechanic to each machine.

The accommodation for the passengers impresses one by its comfort. Behind the wings, in the fuselage, is a saloon holding a triple series of two wicker chairs abreast, with a passage between them. The walls, hung with grey tapestry, the large windows from end to end on both sides, give one a feeling of being in a large and well-appointed limousine motor-car. The notice on the walls, in French and English, forbidding smoking, is eloquent of the conditions of the journey; passengers agonized with anxiety have not usually much inclination to smoke. In the forepart of the starboard side—aircraft have

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their port and starboard sides like a ship—is a raised platform railed off, below a trap-door which slides back. That is the observation platform. Passengers desiring an all-round view when in flight don one of the flying-helmets provided, and mount to the platform with head and shoulders fully exposed.

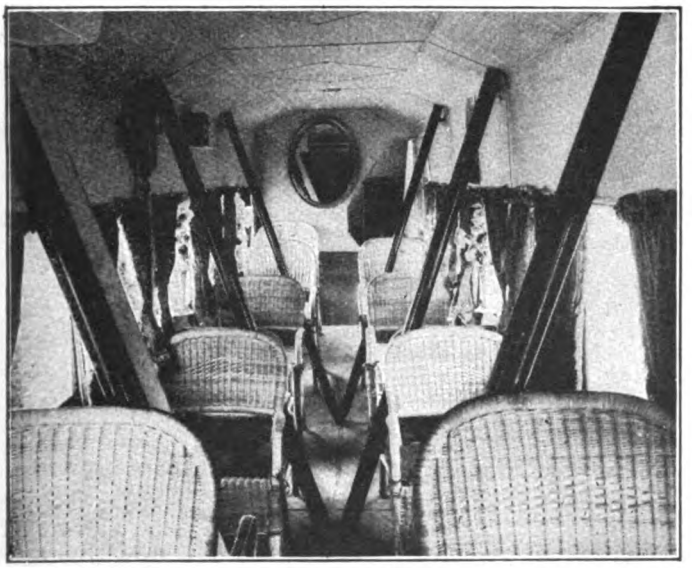
In the centre of the machine, between the planes and underneath the tanks, is the luggage hold. Forward of that, reached by a trap-door in the floor, is another small saloon with two wicker chairs for passengers. Behind the passengers in this compartment are a number of levers, switches, etc., controlling the pressure-pumps and other technical matters. During flight the mechanic crawls back here and attends to these things when necessary.

Forward of this small saloon, and communicating with it, is the cockpit, where pilot and mechanic sit side by side in front of the row of dials, gauges, compasses, and other instruments of navigation. Crawl through a door under the dashboard, and you find yourself in a tiny open cockpit in the extreme nose of the nacelle. Here there are two seats for passengers, seats Numbers One and Two, and just room to sit, provided that neither of you is too large. (I was Number One, and they had omitted to measure my companion before allotting him to seat Number Two.)

Being desirous of experiencing not only the sensations of the passenger seated at that completely exposed extremity, but also of the luxurious individual who prefers the comfort of the "limousine" saloon, I seated myself in the latter for the journey from Cricklewood to Hounslow.

CAPTAIN F. BRITTEN AUSTIN AND THE HANDLEY-PAGE MACHINE IN WHICH HE MADE THE FLIGHT TO PARIS.

The door is closed, the passengers—there were others besides myself—settle themselves with a rather tense smile upon their faces, the port engine emits a sudden deafening roar and its propeller disappears in a whirl that becomes invisible, the starboard engine imitates its brother—we are moving. The grass slips past under the broad windows, the sheds recede—but they do not fall away from us. We are "taxi-ing" across the aerodrome for space to climb against the wind. There is enough of that, rain lashes furiously against the windows, ugly storm-clouds chase each other across the sky. A few years ago and no machine would have left its hangar on such a day. But we scorn the weather and turn, with a sudden cessation of the port engine, to face its bluster. We are round—and, with an unexpected, deafening, ear-shattering roar, both engines leap to their maximum of synchronized effort.

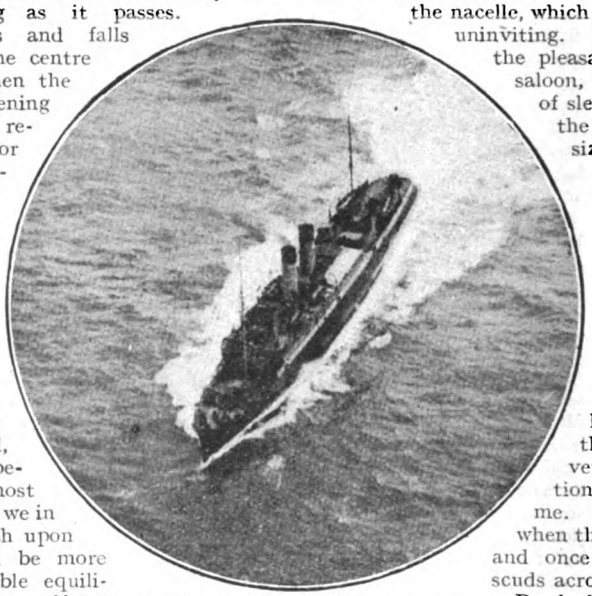


THE INTERIOR OF A HANDLEY-PAGE—"THE ACCOMMODATION FOR THE PASSENGERS IMPRESSES ONE BY ITS COMFORT."

The grass flits swiftly past us close under the windows—swiftly and yet more swiftly. We bump once or twice upon inequalities of the ground—and then we bump no more. The grass is no longer six feet below the windows—it is twenty—fifty. The hangars come into sight again, viewed

from above, diminished. They twirl away from us as we circle in a slight bank-up of one side of the saloon. A long road with absurdly small motor-buses slides away beneath us, shrinking as it passes.

The saloon rises and falls very slightly, like the centre cabin of a yacht when the tide turns in the evening of a calm day. It remains for a minute or two at an almost imperceptible angle of elevation, whilst a ground-plan of streets and houses swings round below us. Then, on an even keel, with an utter absence of undulation, we remain, it seems, poised in the air above a toy-world, which drifts away beneath, evenly and almost imperceptibly. Were we in the cabin of a launch upon a lake there would be more suggestion of unstable equilibrium, of effort. The uniform roar of the engines, varying not at all, passes out of perception in its monotony. Only when one essays the conversation which is just possible does one realize its volume and its violence. So quiet and comfortable is it in the saloon that one resents the stern injunction not to smoke.



CROSSING THE CHANNEL IN THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY—A STEAMER SEEN FROM THE AIR.

The world beneath us—so absurdly toy-like that one feels inclined to applaud the excellence of the models of omnibus and tram-car—drifts with a fallacious slowness fifteen hundred feet below—London's north-west suburbs like the miniature representation of a town-planning exhibit, unreal in its smallness but wonderfully built to scale. Then green fields again, drab under the grey sky. We are approaching Hounslow.

From the observation-platform, where the blast catches you in the throat and chokes you, one looks back over the broad flat tail of the machine to a misty greyness punctured by steeples—London. Forward of us, growing larger as we imperceptibly descend, a line of white hangars stretches across a field—Hounslow.

An easy swerve, a slight depression forward of the saloon, the grass seen through the windows comes up to meet us as, against the wind, we slide down to meet it, a gentle shock—and once more we are running across the field. Another moment and we have halted, with a last roar from one of the engines, before a line of hangars. Over one of them, absurdly familiar and yet incongruously new, are the words; "Customs —Douane—Dogana." We are at the terminus of the Continental Air-route.

A few minutes only do we stay here. We are scheduled to leave at 12 noon; it is now 11.55. I descend from the comfortable saloon, to be replaced by other passengers, checked off on a list by an official. My seat of the journey to Paris is that Number One in the extreme nose of the nacelle, which now seems strangely uninviting. I think ruefully of the pleasant warmth of that saloon, and the fierce burst of sleet that sweeps over the aerodrome emphasizes my regrets.

There is no time to brood over them. I am helped into a large flying-coat, a flying-helmet is buckled chokingly tight across my throat, I clamber up a ladder through the trap-door, and crawl through the hutch into such of the front seat as my very generously proportioned companion leaves me. Barely am I settled when the engines roar again, and once more the machine scuds across the ground.

Perched up here in the nose, with probably less than half an inch of three-ply wood between me and the wide world, it looks a long way to fall as I glance down upon the rough meadow over which we bump swiftly. Once more the port engine ceases, we swerve round, and then, with a mighty roar, we rush into the wind which smites shatteringly at the ears and chokes the respiration of the lungs. A moment—and then the hedge which we are approaching falls away beneath us. We are up, climbing in slow, easy curves, whilst the sleet afflicts the face with a myriad tiny pin-points that prick acutely. Decidedly, I was a fool to choose seat Number One.

For a minute or two it is impossible to keep the face above the little bulwark. That driving rain is blinding. Then, when I could look again, I saw London, whelmed in streaming clouds, two thousand feet below me to the left—"to port," my apologies—and black monsters of the storm reaching out hail-white tentacles to us from the sky-chaos of the north-west. Then we swerve due south-east upon our course, and the more violent buffeting of the wind ceases now that we launch ourselves upon it and outrace it.

But the view is limited. Cloud after cloud looms up ahead, becomes a fog as we drive into it; cloud after cloud obscures the landscape below with streaming curtains of rain. The wind drowns every sound; the roar of the engine, carried back, is only just perceptible, far away. The eyes stream with water (the company should provide goggles for passengers in the front seats), and every now and then a fresh fury of rain completely blinds one.

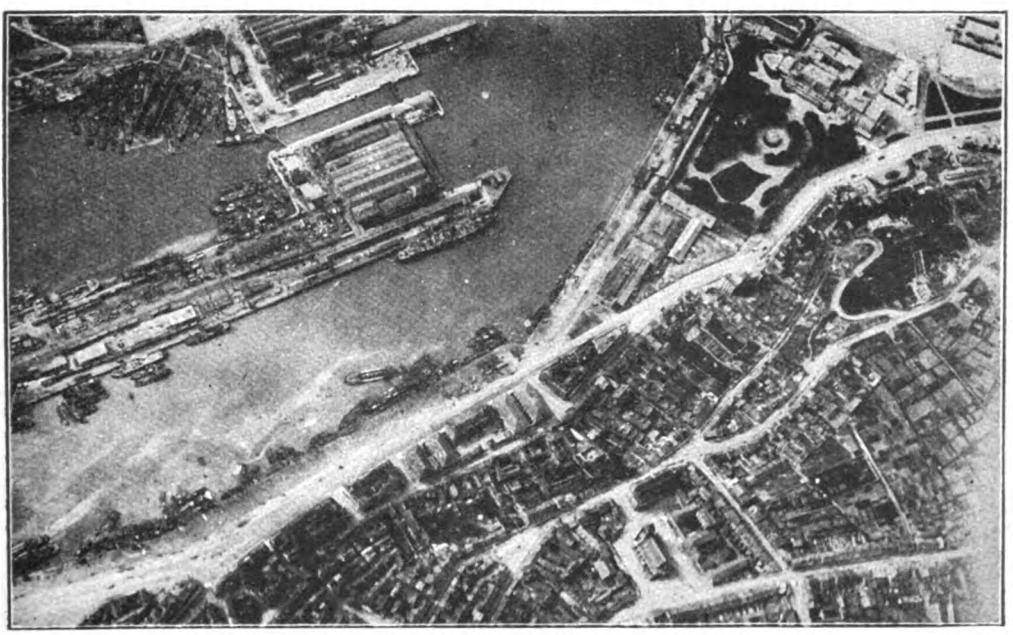
By the time I had adjusted my senses to these

conditions—I felt like nothing so much as a look-out man on the prow of a ship in a gale—and could look about me and below with some accuracy of perception, we were following the line of the North Downs in a burst of sunshine, our shadow flitting below us like the shadow of a bird over the tiny fields enclosed by their frequent hedges. We sped along on an even keel, with no rise and fall that was noticeable, at something more than seventy-five miles an hour, and yet with an apparent slowness over landmarks measured from our height of about two thousand feet. In the intervals of clear weather everything below us in that toy-world was distinctly recognizable—the traffic on the roads, the strike-emptied railways, the horses and cattle in the fields. But these things seemed not to be the real streets and animals of our world of men. It was a perfect miniature, done to scale, for our admiration; not a world in which we had once lived.

Again the bad weather enveloped us, and, when it cleared, there, far ahead, gleamed a long, broad ribbon of burnished metal, stretched, it seemed, midway between the mists of earth and sky. The English Channel! Another moment or two, and under a sky that was suddenly clear and blue, we were roaring over Romney Marsh, its stubble gilt beneath us in the sunshine, fringed with a line of silver where the waves broke upon its beach. We swerved slightly up-Channel to where the chalk made a thin white line under the green brow of the cliffs that showed their back to us, and then turned to starboard, where the foam splayed itself, flat to our eyes, at the foot of white walls which thrust the long arm of Folkestone breakwater into a blue sea. Below us now was a wide stretch of blue water, stained with dark patches of underlying rock, and the shadows of scudding clouds, marbled with tiny veins of foam dispersing from a myriad centres. They were the "white horses" of a fresh gale into which the ships, trailing a train of foam far behind them from the white froth at their bows, crashed and wallowed. They passed below us, tiny toys exquisitely made, their decks visible from stem to stern with Lilliputian boats dangling from their upper works, like the models sold in a box. A rare sailing vessel, tiny as the rest, close-hauled upon her course down Channel, plunged beneath us in an absurdly realistic imitation of the real thing.

We had been flying for an hour when we left the English coast. Half an hour more and Cape Grisnez was close under us, foam-fringed in the north-west gale. We crossed the coast-line to the north of it and turned southwards—to see an appalling array of inky-black clouds scudding, across our track, inland from the sea. Obviously, it was a squall of more than ordinary violence. Below the heaped confusion of those threatening cloud-masses, black as night in their bulk, but fringed with white hail-streamers, the country-side was blotted out in a downpour of rain. Beyond them, on their seaward flank, the sun was reflected metallically, from the waters of the Channel which they were leaving. I wondered for a moment, and then, as if in answer to my expectation, the pilot swerved us once more to starboard. We skirted round the tail of that diabolical squall and swung inland again behind it; below us, to starboard, the familiar ground-plan of Boulogne.

We drove steadily on, as stable as though upon a perfectly-levelled road, following the railway line towards Etaples. Beneath us was a great



"BELOW US WAS THE FAMILIAR GROUND-PLAN OF BOULOGNE."

forest, a multitude beyond computation of little rounded treetops, green and golden in the sun.

And then, suddenly, another squall loomed up right across our path, a line of dark cloud about five hundred feet above us. We were flying at three thousand feet. It looked as though we might pass under it and miss it. Our pilot thought so too, for he held straight on his course. We approached swiftly.

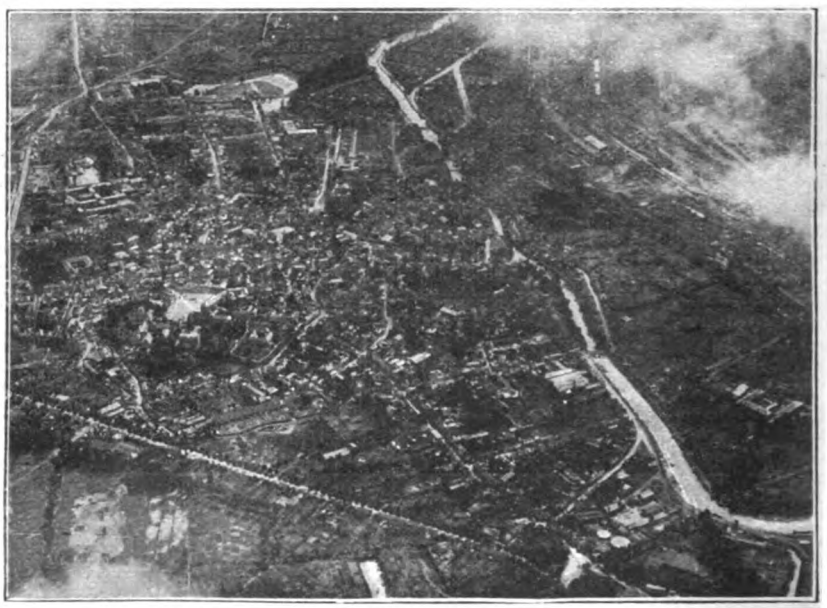
Then suddenly, with incredible violence, a storm of hail dashed into our faces, blinding us, seeming to flay the skin from our cheeks, and simultaneously our nose went down and, in one long, rushing dive, we raced earthwards. The moments passed, long-drawn-out, and still our headlong plunge continued. Behind me, though I did not know it, the pilot was straining with all his strength to "hold her up." Suddenly her nose shot upward again and, with a sensation of being on a steep and dangerous switchback, we soared up into a safe height once more. We had nose-dived fifteen hundred feet in a few seconds. The hail still beat viciously upon us, but presently that ceased and we drove on once more with steady keel in bright sunshine over the hedgeless patchwork of the French fields.

Etaples over to our right, Montreuil almost beneath us, Abbeville directly below, we passed and recognized, though the ground-plan of any town is of small interest save to him who seeks to bomb. From Abbeville we followed the Somme Valley, its floods and marshes gleaming in the sun, for some distance, and then struck straight for Paris on a compass-course.

Very pleasant it was, despite the heavy wind that smote in gust after gust, to sail over the countryside, low enough to pick out its every feature in the illumination of the afternoon sun. The last storm-cloud disappeared. The sky was a pale autumn blue veiled with mist upon the horizon. Below us passed town and village, field and forest and river, in endless succession.

At last Beauvais spread itself beneath us, with its extensive railroad sidings on the banks of its blue river, and we realized that we were nearing the end of our journey. Only forty miles more over a landscape without any particular mark of distinction—and then, dimly in the brown mist upon the horizon far ahead, we saw the slender silhouette of the Eiffel Tower—Paris!

Ere we reached the first houses of the great city we came gently earthwards. Once more we saw long lines of white hangars bordering a spacious field; once more we circled down to them, raced across the grass, and came to rest.



ABBEVILLE, SEEN THROUGH A GAP IN THE CLOUDS.

The flight was over. We had arrived at Le Bourget. After the Customs examination, the motor-cars supplied by the Handley-Page Company took the passengers into Paris. It seemed scarcely credible that we had indeed arrived.

It may reassure a nervous intending passenger if I say that, apart from the headlong nose-dive in that hail-storm, there was never any suggestion of that discomfort so well known to the cross-Channel traveller, and never any feeling of insecurity—and yet Lieutenant Hankinson, the pilot, informed me that never, in his three years of war-flying, had he flown in such dangerous weather. It was the most trying flight he had ever made. Normally, in good weather, the machine would drive straight along on a perfectly even keel, without shock or undulation, from London to Paris. But the next time I travel I shall sit in the saloon and take my lunch with me.

"It's a way he has with the women."

The Odds

by

ETHEL M. DELL

ILLUSTRATED BY W. R. S. STOTT. R.I.

"IF he comes my way, I'll shoot him!" said Dot Burton, her blue eyes gleaming in he boyish, tanned face. "I'm not such a bad shot, am I, Jack!"

"Not so bad," said Jack, kindly. "But don't shoot at sight, or p'r'aps you'll shoot a policeman—which might be awkward for us both!"

"As if I should be such an idiot as that!" protested Dot. "I wasn't born yesterday, anyhow."

"No?" said Jack. "Somehow you look as if you were."

"Don't you be a donkey, Jack!" said his young sister, with an impudent snap of the fingers under his nose. "Being ten years older than I am doesn't qualify you for that superior pose. You're only a man, you know, after all."

"Buckskin Bill is only a man, but he's a pretty tough proposition," said Burton, with a frown.

She smoothed the frown away with caressing fingers. "I know. That's why I'd like to shoot him. But he's sure to be caught now, isn't he? They've got him in a trap. He'll never wriggle through with Fletcher Hill to outwit him. You said yourself that with him on the job the odds were dead against him."

"Oh, I know. So they are. But he's such a wily devil. Well, I'd better be going." Jack Burton arose with the deliberate movements of a heavy man. "I'm sick of this business, Dot. If it weren't for you, I believe I'd chuck it all and go into business in a town."

"Oh, darling! How silly!" protested Dot. "What a good thing I came out when I did! Things seem to be at a rather low ebb with you. But cheer up! What's a few head of cattle when all's said and done? When once this rascal is laid by the heels, you'll make up quicker than you know. Of course you will. Don't let yourself get downhearted! What is the good?"

He smiled a little. There was something heartening in the girl's slim activity of pose apart from her words. She looked indomitable. He pulled her to him and kissed her.

"Well, take care of yourself, Dot! You won't be frightened? You needn't be. He won't come your way. Hill has sworn solemnly to keep an extra guard in this direction. He may call round himself before the day is over. It wouldn't surprise me. Don't shoot him if he does! At least, give him a feed first!"

"Oh, really, Jack!" the girl protested. "I shall be cross with you before long. You'd better go quick before it comes on."

She put her arms round his neck and gave him a tight hug. Her sunburnt face was

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pressed to his. "Now, you won't do anything silly?" she urged him, softly. "I don't like parting with you in this mood. I wish I were coming too."

"Rubbish! Rubbish!" he said. "You stay at home, little shepherdess, and look after the lambs! I won't be late back. Mind you are civil to Fletcher Hill if he turns up! He'll be a magistrate one of these days if he plays his cards well."

"If he catches the biggest cattle-thief in Australia?" suggested Dot, screwing her face into a very boyish grimace. "I wouldn't care to get promotion for that job, if I were a man. But I'll be vastly polite to him if he turns up. You've never seen me doing the pretty, have you? But I can—awfully well—when I try."

Her brother laughed. "Oh, don't be too pretty, my child! It's a dangerous game. Good-bye! Don't go far away!"

"My dear man! As if I should have time!" ejaculated Dot.

She gave him another squeeze and let him go.

There were a great many things to be done that day, things which a mere ignorant male would never have dreamed of. There was bread to be baked, an evening meal to be prepared, countless household duties waiting to be done, and work enough in Jack's wardrobe alone to keep an ordinary woman busy for a week. Poor Jack! He was not a great hand at needlework. She had been shocked at the state in which she had found him. But she had not shirked her responsibilities. And more than ever was she glad now that she had come to him. For he needed her in a moral sense as well. She was too much of a "new chum" to help him in any very active sense outside the homestead at present. But he needed a good deal of moral backing just at that moment. She had come to him straight from England, and full of enthusiasm. He had hewn his own way and begun to enjoy prosperity. But she had arrived to find that prosperity temporarily checked. A gang of cattle-thieves were making serious depredations among his stock.

The police were hot on the trail, and it was believed that the gang had been split up, but so far no notable captures had been made. Buckskin Bill, the leader, was still at large, and while this remained the case there could be no security for anyone. Every farmer in the district was keen on the chase, expecting to fall a victim.

And—there was no doubt about it—Buckskin Bill was in a very tight corner. Inspector Hill had the matter in hand, and he was not a man to be lightly baffled. Jack

"WELL, TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF, DOT; YOU WON'T BE FRIGHTENED? YOU NEEDN'T BE. BUCKSKIN BILL WON'T COME YOUR WAY."

regarded him with wholehearted admiration. But somehow Dot, the new arrival, felt curiously prejudiced against him. She wanted Buckskin Bill to be caught, but she could not help hoping that this astute Inspector of Police would not be his captor. She was sure from Jack's description that she would not like the man, and as she went about her work she earnestly hoped that he would not come her way, at least in her brother's absence.

She was busy indoors during the whole of the morning. As midday approached the heat became intense. Jack usually returned for a meal at noon, but she was not expecting him that day. He had joined the chase, and had taken with him every available man. She might have felt lonely if she had not been so engrossed. As it was, she hummed cheerily to herself as she went to and fro. There were so many things to think about, and it was such an interesting world in which she found herself.

In the early afternoon she went out to feed a few motherless lambs that her brother had placed in her charge. She stood in the shelter of a great barn with the little things clustering round her, while Robin, the old black hound, lay watching and snapping at the flies. Miles and miles of pasture stretched around her, broken here and there by thick scrub and occasional groups of blue gum trees.

The hot glare of the afternoon sun made the eyes ache, and she was glad when her task was over. When she stood up at length she was feeling a little giddy, and she leaned for a moment against the barn wall to steady herself. A rank growth of grass grew all about her feet, and as she stood there gazing rather dizzily downwards she saw a ripple pass along it close to the building.

Any but a " new chum " would have known the meaning of that small disturbance, for there was no breath of air to cause it. Any but a " new chum," being quite defenceless, would have beaten instant and swift retreat.

But Dot Burton in her inexperience had no thought of evil. She was only curious. She forgot her weariness, and bent down to watch the moving grass.

At the same moment Robin suddenly raised his head and looked keenly in the direction of the farm, with a growl. The girl barely heard him, so interested was she. She even stooped and parted the tall grass with her hands when unexpectedly it ceased to move.

The next instant she started back with a wild cry of horror. For it was as if the grass itself had suddenly come to malignant life under her hands. A shape—long, thin, vividly green—rose up before her, and swayed with an angry hiss.

Her cry seemed to galvanize Robin into action, for he sprang up fiercely barking, but his attention was not directed towards her. He leapt instead towards the house, yelling resentment as he went. And in a flash the green evil struck at the bare brown arm!

Dot shrieked again, shrieked like a demented creature, and in a moment, with hands flung wide, she was fleeing across the sun-baked yard.

She reached the open door immediately behind Robin, and sprang in headlong. Robin had ceased to bark, and was fawning at the feet of a man who had evidently just entered. He was bent down over the dog, fondling him with one hand. In the other something bright gleamed, and as he straightened himself the girl saw that it was a revolver; but she was too agitated to take much note of the fact.

She burst in upon him in breathless, horrified distress. " I've been bitten!" she cried to him. " Bitten by a snake!"

" Where? " he said.

He had her by the arm in a second and was pushing up the loose holland sleeve. Later she marvelled at his promptitude, his instant intuition. At the moment she was too terrified, too near collapse, to notice any of these things.

He pushed her down upon a chair and knelt beside her. She found herself staring down at a shock of straw-coloured hair, while the owner of it sucked and sucked with an almost brutal force at a place in the crook of her arm that felt as if a red-hot needle had been plunged into it. She could feel the drawing of his teeth against her flesh. It was a sensation almost more horrible than the actual snake-bite had been.

Twice he turned his head and spat into the hearth, and she saw that his face was smooth and young, the colour of sun-baked brick.

At last he looked up at her with the most extraordinarily blue eyes she had ever seen, and said, with a kindly twinkle in them, " I don't think you'll die this time, missis."

She looked from him to her arm. The bite showed no more than the sting of a nettle, but around it was the deep impress of his teeth. Certainly he had done his task thoroughly.

The kettle was singing over the fire. He got to his feet and patted Robin on the head. " Let's wash it!" he said. " Is there a basin handy? "

Dot sat in her chair, feeling rather weak. He fetched a bowl and set it on a chair by her side. He poured water into it from the kettle.

She looked up at him rather apprehensively. " I needn't scald it, need I? "

He smiled down at her in instant reassurance, a vivid smile that warmed her fear-chilled heart. His teeth were white and

"'I'VE BEEN BITTEN!' SHE CRIED. 'BITTEN BY A SNAKE!'"

regular, like the teeth of a young wild animal.

"There's some cold water somewhere, isn't there?" he said.

She told him where to find it, and he cooled the steaming water to a temperature that she could endure without flinching. Then he made her rest her arm in it.

"That'll comfort it," he said. "Now, have you got any spirits in the house?"

"I don't drink spirits," she said quickly.

He smiled again. "No? But you must this time—just to complete the cure. Tell me where to find them!"

His smile was certainly magnetic, for she told him without further protest.

When he brought the spirits, she looked at him for the first time with active interest.

"I suppose you are Inspector Hill?" she said

He was pouring whisky into a glass. He gave her a sidelong glance. "Now that's a very clever guess," he said. "What put you on to that?"

She smiled, mainly because he had meant her to smile. "I've been half-expecting you all day," she said.

He looked down at her more fully as he finished his task. "That's very interesting," he said. "Who told you to expect me?"

"My brother—Jack Burton," she explained.

"Oh! Jack Burton is your brother, is he?" He contemplated her thoughtfully for a second or two. "Well, I seem to have turned up at the right moment," he said.

"Yes." She leaned forward with flushed face upraised. "And I haven't said 'Thank you' yet. I'm so grateful to you. I can't tell you how grateful."

"Don't!" he said. "Don't! Drink this instead! Drink to the lucky chance that sent me your way! I'm proud to have been of use to you."

She took the glass unwillingly. 'I'm sure I shall hate it."

"It's the best antidote to snake-poison out," he said. 'I swear it won't upset you. If it makes you sleepy, well, you're in the right place and safe enough."

She liked his utterance of the last words. They had a genuine ring. But, "If I drink, so must you!" she said. "And eat, too! Jack said I was to give you a meal if you came."

He smiled again, a large, humorous smile. "That's the kindest thing Jack Burton has ever done," he said, with warm approval. "I'll join you with pleasure, missis. This man-trapping business is hungry work for all of us."

Dot frowned a little. It did not please her to be reminded of his mission. Her former prejudice began to revive within her, his kindness notwithstanding.

"I don't like the thought of it myself," she told him abruptly. "But, of course, I'm only a 'new chum.'"

'What?" he said, pausing in the act of pouring himself out a drink. "That sounds as if you want that scoundrel Bill to get away."

She coloured in some confusion under his look. How could she expect to make a policeman understand? 'No—no!" she said, with vehemence. "I'm not quite so soft as that. I'd shoot him myself if he came my way. But I hate to think of a dozen men all on the track of one. It really isn't fair."

He laughed, but without superiority. "And yet you'd swell the odds? Do you call that fair?"

Dot paused to collect her arguments. It seemed that possibly even this machine of justice carried a small fragment of sympathy in his soul. Certainly he was not the judicial automaton she had expected him to be.

"It's like this," she said. "I'd shoot him if he came my way because he has done us a lot of mischief, and I want to stop it. But I'd do it squarely. I wouldn't do it when he wasn't looking. And I wouldn't—ever—make it my profession to hunt down criminals and even employ black men to help. I think that's hateful. I couldn't live that way. I'd be above it."

'I see." He lifted his glass to her in a silent toast, and drank a deep draught. "Then if you chanced to know where he was, I take it you'd just settle him yourself, if you could. But you wouldn't in any case give him away to the police. Is that your point of view?"

'It isn't unreasonable, is it?" she said, with a touch of eagerness. "I mean, if you weren't what you are, wouldn't you do the same?"

"I don't know," he said, smiling at her whimsically. "You see, being what I am handicaps me rather. I haven't much time for working out nice problems."

Dot leaned back again. He had disappointed her. But she could not neglect her duty on that account. She took her arm out of the water and dried it. Then she rose.

"How does it feel?" he said.

"Oh, only a little stiff," she answered, turning away. "Now I am going to get you something to eat. Sit down, won't you?"

Her tone was distant, but he did not seem to notice any change. He thanked her and sat down, facing the open door. Robin sat pressed against his knee. It was evident that the dog entertained no doubts regarding the visitor. Having passed him as respectable, he accepted him without reserve.

This fact presently occurred to Dot as she waited upon her visitor, and, since it was not her nature to prolong an uncomfortable situation, she broke the silence to comment upon it.

"He doesn't take to everyone at sight," she said.

"No?" She saw again that frank, disarming smile. "You see, missis, I know the ways of animals, and a very useful sort of knowledge I've found it."

"I wonder why you call me missis," she said. "I'm Jack's sister, not his wife."

He looked up at her. "But you're the boss of the establishment, I take it?"

She smiled also half against her will. 'I'm rather new at present. But no doubt I shall learn."

"And then you'll go and boss someone else?" he suggested.

She coloured a little. "No. I shall stick to Jack," she said, with decision.

"Lucky Jack!" he said. "But you're quite right. There's no one good enough for you round here. We're a low breed mostly."

"I didn't mean that!" she protested, in quick distress. "I never thought that!"

"I know," he said. "I know. But you've sort of felt it all the same. Me, for instance!" His intensely blue eyes challenged her suddenly. "Haven't you said to yourself, 'That man may be up to local standard, but he's made of shocking crude material'? Straight now! Haven't you?"

She hesitated, her face burning under his direct look. "Do you—do you really want to know what I think?" she said.

"I do." There was something uncompromising in the brief rejoinder, yet somehow she did not find him formidable.

She answered him without difficulty in spite of her embarrassment. "I think, then, that it isn't you yourself at all that I feel like that about. It's just your profession."

"Ah!" He began to smile again. "Once live down that, and I might be possible. Is that it?"

She nodded, still flushed, yet curiously not uneasy. "Something like that. Why can't you be a farmer like Jack?"

"I wish I were," he said, unexpectedly.

"Why?" The word slipped out almost in spite of her, but she felt she must have an answer.

He answered her with his eyes full on her. "Because I'd like to lead the sort of life you would approve of," he said. "I've a notion it would be worth while."

She turned aside from his look. "It's only a matter of opinion, of course," she said.

"Is it?" he said. He turned his attention to the meal before him, and ate rapidly for a few moments while he considered the matter. At length: "Yes," he said. "I suppose you're right. Anyhow, you don't feel drawn that way. You won't feel a bit pleased if Buckskin Bill gets caught by the police this journey after this?"

Dot shook her head. "I don't think a man ought to be tracked down like a wild beast," she said, resolutely.

The blue eyes that watched her kindled a little. He finished what was on his plate and pushed it from him.

"I'm greatly obliged to you," he said, "for your hospitality. I needed it—badly enough. You'll thank Jack for me, won't you? I must be going now. But there's just one thing I'd like to say to you first."

He got up and stood before her. It was impossible not to admire his splendid height and breadth of chest. He could have lifted her easily with one hand. And yet, strangely, though she felt his power he did not make her aware of her own weakness.

She looked up at him. "Yes? What is it?"

"Just this, Miss Burton," he said, and somehow he lingered over the name in a fashion that made it sound musical in her ears. "I'd like to strike a bargain with you—because you've made a sort of impression on me. I'm not meaning any impertinence. You know that?"

"Go on!" she whispered, almost inaudibly.

He went on, bending slightly towards her. "The odds are dead against Buckskin Bill escaping, but—he may escape. If he does, will you—the next time I come to see you—treat me—without prejudice?"

He also was almost whispering as he uttered the last words.

She drew a sharp breath and looked at him. "You—you—are going to let him go?" she said, incredulously.

He did not answer. His eyes were drawing hers with a magnetism she could not resist. And they thrilled her—they thrilled her!

"The odds are dead against him," he said again, after a moment. "Is it—a bargain?"

Her heart gave a queer little jerk within her. She stood motionless for a space. Then, with a little quivering smile, she very, very slowly gave him her hand.

He took it into his great brown one, and though his touch was wholly gentle she felt the force of the man throbbing behind it, and it seemed to surge all around and within her.

He stood for a second as if irresolute or uncertain how to treat her. Then, with a wordless sound that needed no interpretation, he pushed back the sleeve from the place whence he had sucked the poison. It only showed a little red now. He bent very low until his lips pressed it again. Then for one

"HE PUSHED BACK THE SLEEVE FROM THE PLACE WHENCE HE HAD SUCKED THE POISON AND BENT VERY LOW UNTIL HIS LIPS PRESSED IT AGAIN."

burning moment they neither moved nor breathed.

The next thing that Dot realized was the passing of his great figure through the doorway out of her sight. She saw him don his slouch-hat as he went.

She cleared the table again and sat down to her work. But somehow all energy had gone from her. A great lassitude hung upon her. Perhaps it was caused by the heat, or possibly by the whisky he had made her drink. There was no resisting it. It pressed her down like a physical weight. She gave herself up to it at last, and leaning back in her chair like a tired child she slept.

Robin lay at her feet. The afternoon crawled away. Like the enchanted princess of old, she reclined in a slumber so deep that life itself seemed to be suspended.

The sun began to slant towards the west, and the pastures took on a golden look. The lambs gambolled together with shrill bleatings. But Dot Burton slept on in her chair, a faint smile on her face of innocence. Though she could not have been dreaming in so deep a repose, her last thought ere she slept must have held happiness. Her serenity lay like a tender veil upon her.

It was drawing towards evening when Robin suddenly raised his head again with a deep growl. There came the sound of footsteps through the open door. The girl stirred and slowly awoke.

She stretched up her arms with a sleepy movement, and then, as voices reached her, roused herself completely and got to her feet.

Her brother and another man—a tall, lantern-jawed stranger—were on the point of entering.

Jack led the way. "Halloa, Dot!" he said. "Have you seen anything of our man? He's broken cover in this direction in spite of us. You haven't shot him by any chance, I suppose?"

Dot looked from him to the man behind him.

"Inspector Hill," said Jack. "Eh? What's the matter?"

"Nothing—nothing!" said Dot. Yet she had gone back a step as if she had been struck. She held out her hand to the policeman. "How do you do? I—I—am very pleased to meet you. So you haven't caught him after all?"

Inspector Hill was looking at her keenly. He wore a sardonic expression, as of one who knows that he has been outwitted. "I have not, madam," he said. "Neither, I presume, have you?"

She shook her head, looking him straight in the face. "No, I haven't. I am afraid I have been asleep. Are you sure he passed this way?"

Her eyes were clear and candid as the eyes of a boy. Inspector Hill turned his own away.

"Yes. Quite sure," he said, with brevity.

"He's a slippery devil," declared Jack Burton. "Sit down, man! My sister is a 'new chum.' She probably wouldn't have known him from a man on the farm if she'd seen him. In fact, if you'd turned up here by yourself she might have shot you—on suspicion."

"I probably should," said Dot, coldly.

She did not like Inspector Hill, and her manner plainly said so.

At her brother's behest she set food before them, for they were hot and jaded after their fruitless day; but she left the duties of host entirely to him, and as soon as possible she went away with Robin to feed the lambs.

A wonderful glow lay upon the grasslands. It was as if she moved through a magic atmosphere upon which some enchantment had been laid. Since that wonderful sleep of hers all things seemed to have changed. Had it all been a dream? she asked herself. Then, shuddering, she turned up her sleeve to find that small red patch upon her arm.

She found it. It tingled to her touch. Yet she continued to finger it with a curious feeling that was almost awe. She thought it must be the memory of his kiss that made it throb so hard.

Someone came softly up behind her. An arm encircled her. She turned with the day-dream still in her eyes and saw her brother.

She pulled down her sleeve quickly, for though his face was kind, he seemed to look at her oddly, almost with suspicion.

"Had a quiet day?" he questioned, gently.

She leaned against his shoulder, feeling small and rather uncomfortable. "I—I was very busy all the morning," she said, evasively.

"And in the afternoon?" he said.

She nestled to him with a little coaxing movement. "In the afternoon," she told him softly, "I went to sleep."

"Yes?" he said.

"That's all," said Dot, lifting her face to kiss him.

He took her chin and held it while he looked long and searchingly into her eyes.

"Dot!" he said.

She made a little gesture of protest, but he held her still.

"Dot, tell me what has been happening!" he said.

She had begun to tremble. "I'll tell you," she said, "when Inspector Hill has gone."

"Tell me now!" he said.

But she shook her head with tightly compressed lips.

"You have seen the man!" he said.

Dot remained silent.

His face grew grim. "Dot! Shall I tell you what Hill said to me just now?"

"If you like," whispered Dot.

"He said, 'She has seen the man, and he has squared her. It's a way he has with the women. You'll find she won't give him away.'"

That stung, as it was meant to sting. She flinched under it. "I hate Inspector Hill!" she said, with vehemence.

He smiled a little. "I don't suppose that fact would upset him much. A good many people don't exactly love him. But look here, Dot! You're not a fool. At least, I hope not. You can't seriously wish to shield a thief. Only this morning you were going to shoot him!"

"Ah!" she said. And then suddenly she pulled up her sleeve and showed him the mark upon her arm. "But he has saved my life since then," she said.

"What?" said Jack. He caught her arm and looked at it. "You've had a snake-bite!" he said.

"Yes, Jack."

His eyes went back to her face. "Why didn't you tell me before? What kind of snake was it?"

She told him, shuddering. "A horrible green thing—green as the grass. I think it had some black marking on its back. I'm not sure. I didn't stop to see. I—oh, Jack!" She broke off in swift consternation. "There is a dead lamb!"

"Ah!" said Jack, and strode across to the barn where it lay, stark and lifeless in the shade in which it had taken refuge from the afternoon heat.

"Oh, Jack!" cried Dot, in distress. "What can have happened to it? Not—not that hateful snake?"

"Not much doubt as to that," said Jack, grimly. "No, don't look too close! It's not a pretty sight. And don't cry, child! What's the good?"

He drew her away, his arm around her, holding her closely, comforting her. "It might have been you," he said.

She lifted her wet face from his shoulder. "It was—it would have been—but for——"

"All right," he interrupted. "Don't say any more!"

He left her to recover herself and went back to Fletcher Hill, sardonically awaiting him.

"On a wrong scent this time," he said. "She's lost one of the lambs from snake-bite, and it's upset her. She's a 'new chum,' you know."

"I know," said Inspector Hill.

Jack Burton leaned upon the table and looked him in the eyes. "My sister is not a detective," he said, warningly. "Buckskin Bill has been one too many for us this time. The odds were dead against him, but he's slipped through. And I've a pretty firm notion he won't come back."

"So have I," said Inspector Hill, unmoved.

"And a blasted good job too!" said Jack Burton, forcibly.

A gleam of humour crossed the Inspector's face. He pulled out his pipe with a gesture that made for peace.

"If I were in your place," he said, "I daresay I'd say the same."

SOLUTIONS TO LAST MONTH'S "PERPLEXITIES."

480.—THE KNIGHT AND THE CALENDAR.

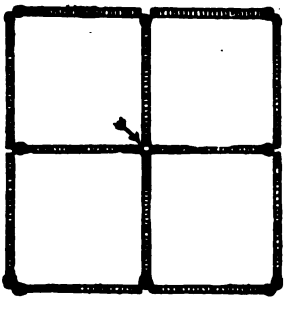
1920 AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
(1)	2	(3)	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	(11)	12	13	14
15	(16)	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	(25)	26	27	28
(29)	30	(31)				

IT will be seen that if I place the knight on 16th August, 1920, it commands squares in which the numbers add up to 100 exactly.

481.—THE PROFITEERING GROCER.

HE must have had 168 each of 20s. notes, of 10s. notes, and of 5s. pieces, making a total of 5,880s., or £294. In each of 6 bags there would be 28 of each kind; in each of the 7 bags, 24 of each kind; and in each of the 8 bags, 21 of each kind.

482.—THE FIVE SQUARES.



PLACE the twelve matches as in the diagram and five squares are enclosed. It is true that the one in the centre (indicated by the arrow) is very small, but no conditions were imposed as to dimensions.

483.—A CHARADE.

THE word is WALL-ACE.

484.—BUYING CUCUMBERS.

THE cucumbers were eightpence each. Then 72 at 8d. each is 48s., and 48 at 8d. is 32s.

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CONDITIONS.

1.—No Story is to be less than 3,000 words or more than 6,000 words in length.
2.—The Proprietors acquire all British and Colonial serial rights in the three winning Stories, one of which will be published in each of the three publications mentioned above.
3.—The Proprietors are to have the right of purchasing the serial rights of any Story submitted which does not win a prize on payment to be agreed upon.
4.—All Manuscripts must be typewritten, and must reach us not later than 1st February, 1920.
5.—Each Story submitted must be signed with a pseudonym. The author's name must not appear on the manuscript. The name and address of the author should be enclosed in a sealed envelope, marked on the outside with the pseudonym, and the words, "Short Story Competition."
6.—The decision of the judges must be taken as final.

THE JUDGES ARE:

Sir ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE
Sir H. RIDER HAGGARD
Mr. H. G. WELLS
Mr. CHARLES GARVICE

THE EDITORS OF
"THE STRAND MAGAZINE,"
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See "JOHN O' LONDON'S WEEKLY"

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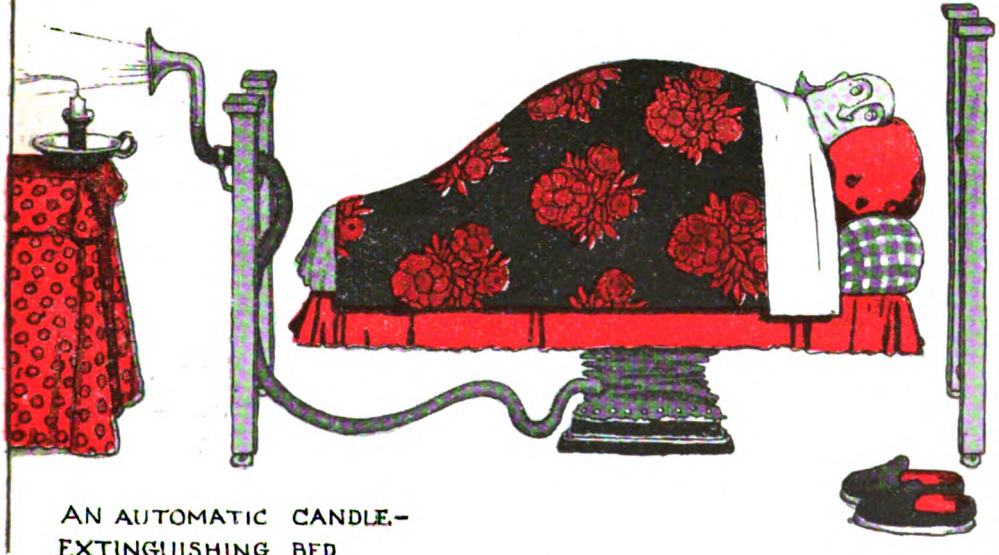
Some Labour-Saving Devices.

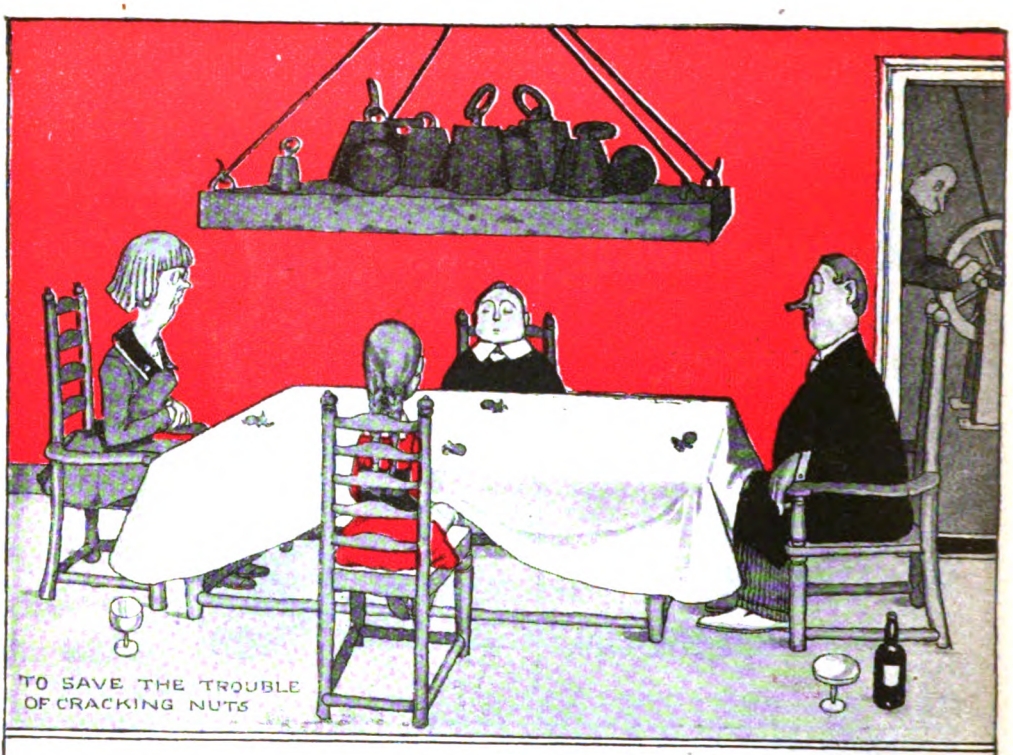
By

W. HEATH ROBINSON.

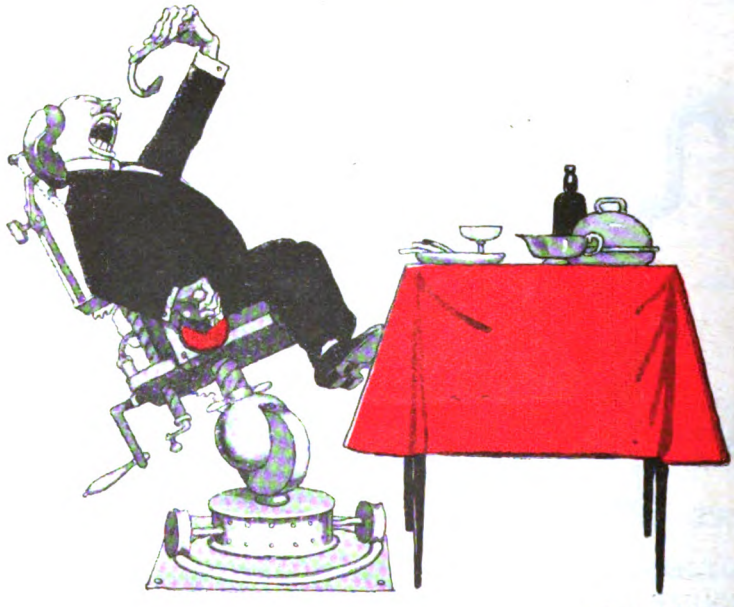
THE TOP WATCH-WINDER



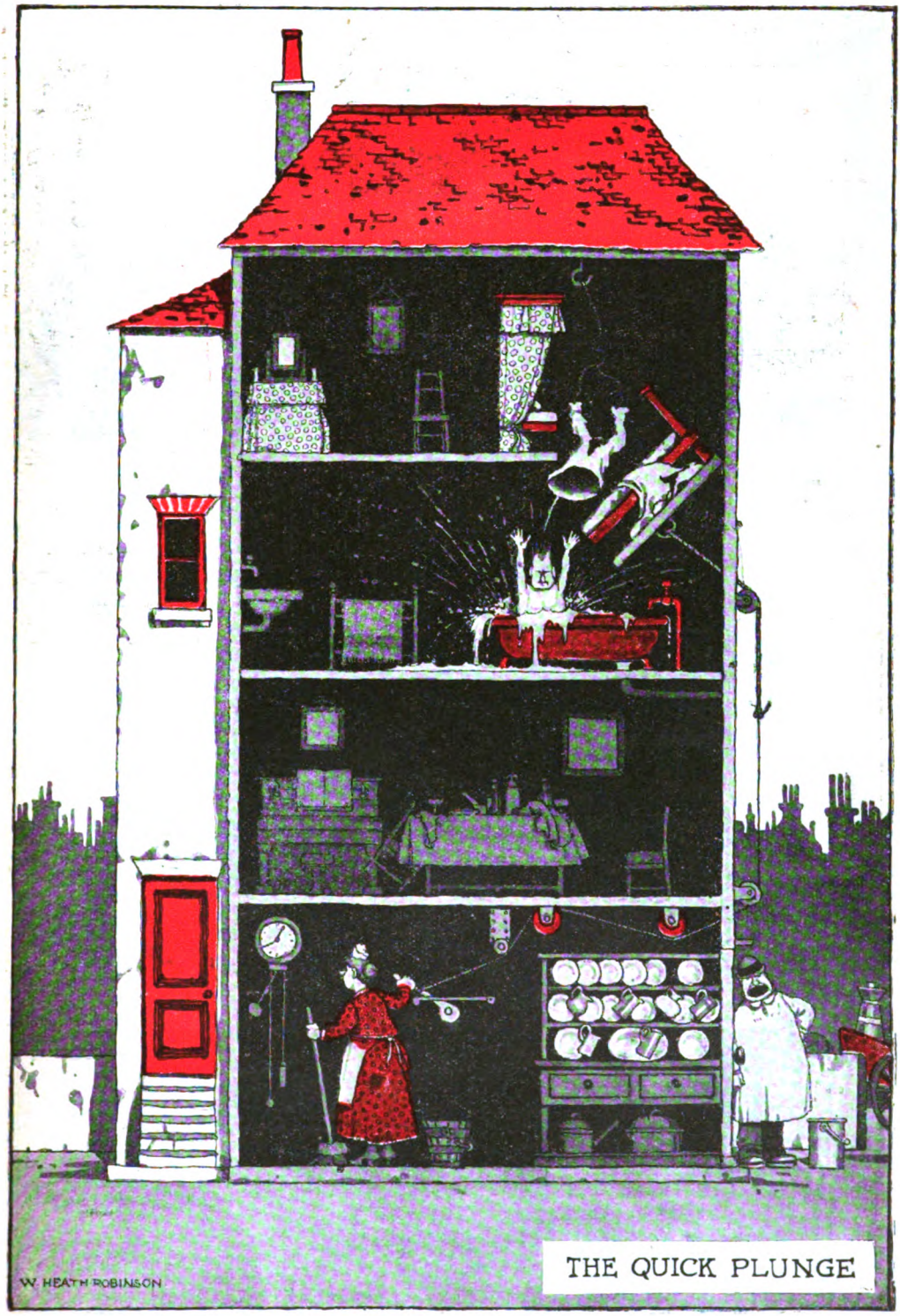
AN AUTOMATIC CANDLE-EXTINGUISHING BED



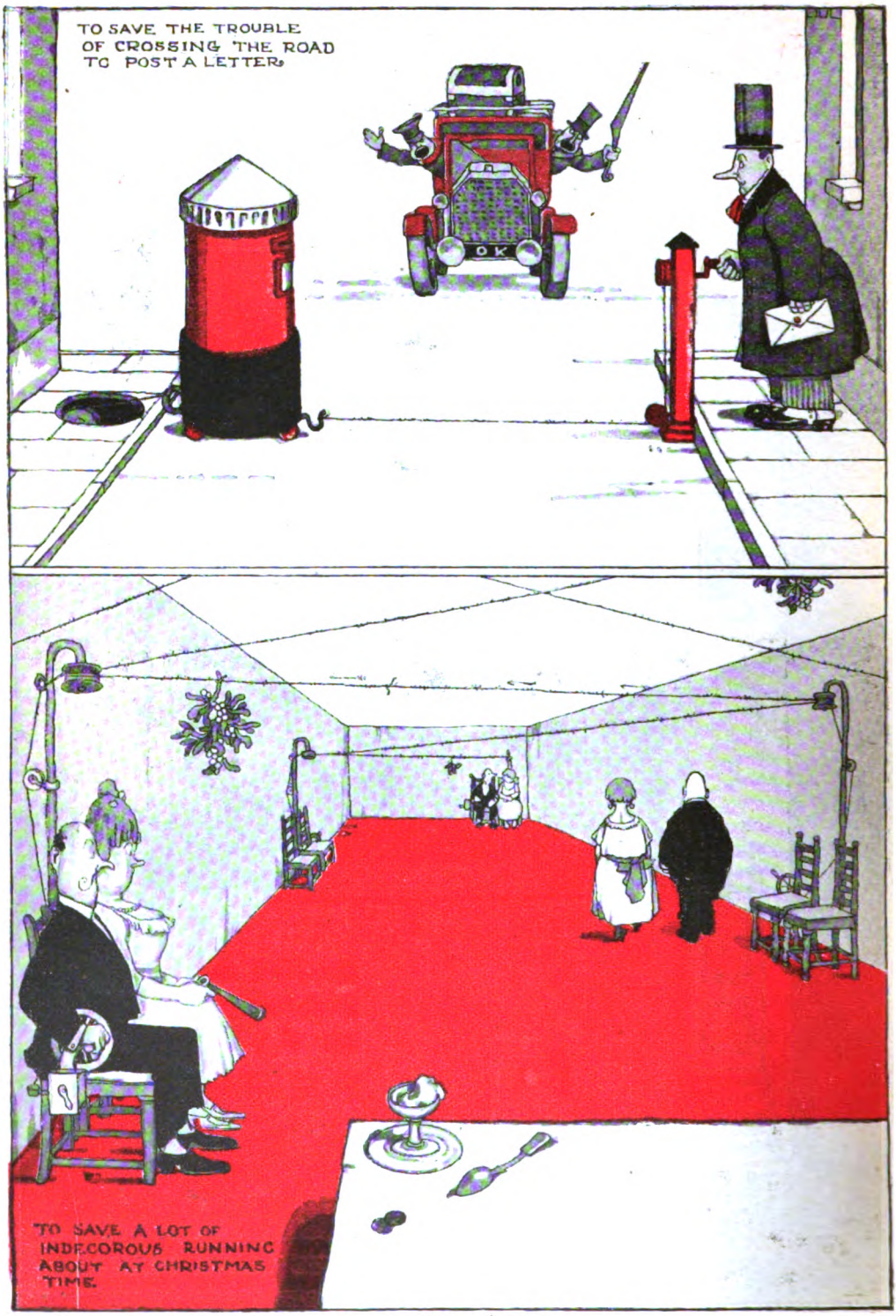
TO SAVE THE TROUBLE OF CRACKING NUTS



THE ASPARAGUS CHAIR



THE QUICK PLUNGE


TO SAVE THE TROUBLE
OF CROSSING THE ROAD
TO POST A LETTER.
TO SAVE A LOT OF
INDECOROUS RUNNING
ABOUT AT CHRISTMAS
TIME.

Kiddies Grave and Gay

By

C. H. TWELVETREES.

"I think you're an awfully beautiful woman!"

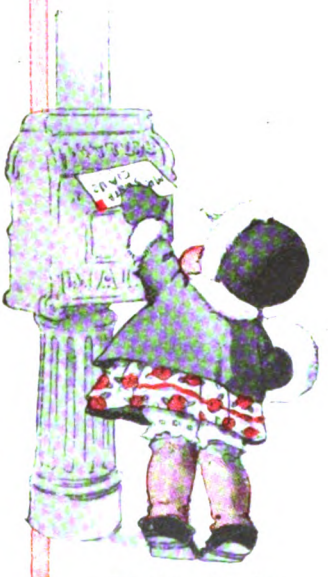
A dark and stormy night.

A bright and smiling morning.

The Twelvetrees Kiddies Santa

Goodness gracious, how the time drags!

O-o-h! isn't it lucky to have a big sister!



That long, long list.

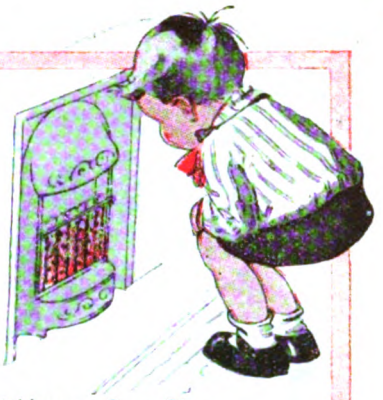
Waiting for the rag-and-bone man. It means money to Bobby, and money means a Christmas present for big sister.

The Twelvetrees Kiddies are looking forward excitedly to the great festival already. You can notice a willingness on the part of Bobby and Lucile to run errands, and do all sorts of little jobs, that is quite remarkable.

It looks as though the contents of somebody's bank are going up in smoke.

are Getting Ready for Claus.

Practising those Christmas carols.



"How can Santa Claus come down this?"

It's remarkable how obedient Lucile is lately.

The book of carols has been resurrected and melody fills the apartment. Bobby's detective instinct is excited by the mysterious locked cupboard, and altogether the entire household wears an air of profound expectancy.

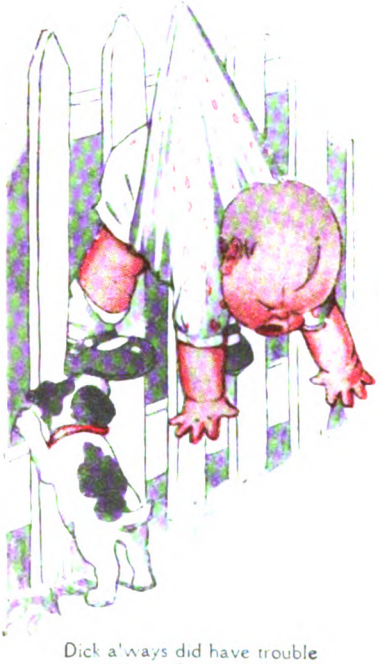
The cupboard of mysterious bundles and everything.

INTRODUCING TOM, DICK, *and* HARRY.

The Mutual Admiration Society.

But Dick has had a good night's sleep, a whale of a breakfast, and is at peace with the whole world.

Tom: "If that kid pulls my tail to-day like he did yesterday, I'm going to give him a good hard dig."



Dick always did have trouble with that fence.

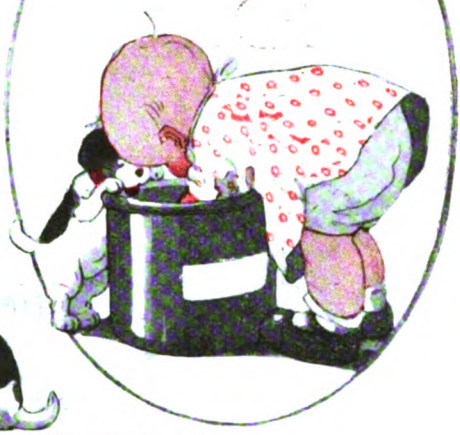
"Is it alive?"—

There were times when it was wise to give Dick a wide berth. And then again there were times when it was wise to stick mighty close.

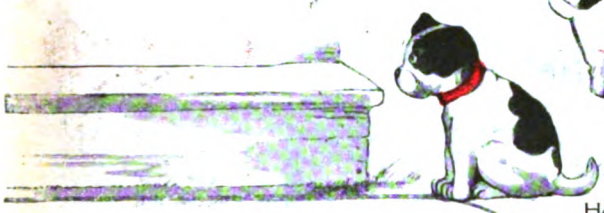
THE THREE GAMBOLEERS

are hard at it again.

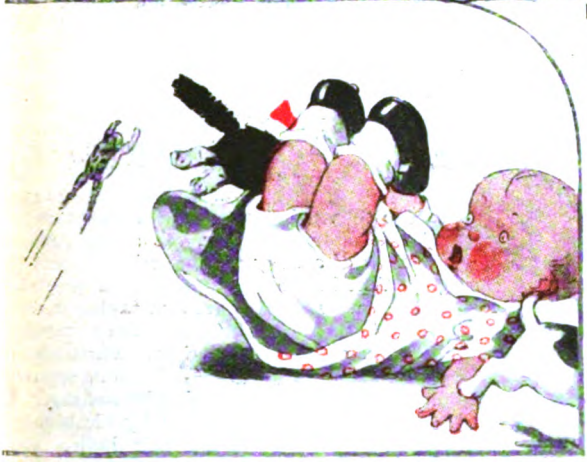
Sometimes Tom and Harry were positive that Dick had angel's wings and wore a halo.



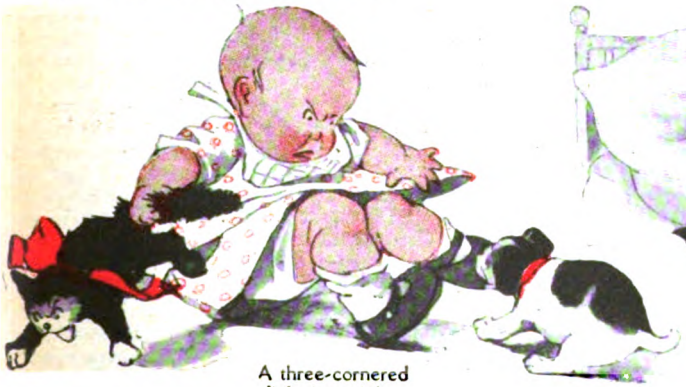
Harry:
"There he is again. Yesterday he rolled me down the hill three times and sat on me twice. I suppose to-day will finish me off."



How people could get pleasure in crossing mud-puddles was too much for Tom and Harry.



"Not much doubt about that!"



A three-cornered fight is no joke.

The end of a perfect day.

MISTLETOE— AND OTHER THINGS

by George Robey

ILLUSTRATED BY A. LEETE

I OUGHT never to have done it. It's my own fault. I blame nobody. I ought to have known better after my "Rest-Cure" experiences. Of course you've heard all about that. How I tried to rest my tired brain in an atmosphere of peace and parsnips in a little country village. Yet (mind you, I blame nobody), like an idiot I was persuaded to spend a Christmas in just such another little village. I bear no malice, mark you, for is not the festive Yuletide close upon us? Is it not the season of happiness?

My business is to recount my adventures when in a weak moment I spent a Christmas in the country with a man I called my friend.

It happened in this way. He came into the dressing-room on Christmas Eve and brought a bottle of "pre-war" and a wild idea. The wild idea didn't appeal to me so much as the "pre-war" until the "pre-war" had been allowed to make its full appeal. I trust I am explicit. Then, under the influence of his persuasive manner I fell. "Good old-fashioned Christmas," he said; "you know, peace on earth, snow on the ground, turkey and stuffing, and all that sort of thing. Lovely, George, old son! Simple and satisfying! A real old Dickens' Christmas. Do you a world of good. I knew you'd come. I've told my friends to expect you!" Then, remembering my "Rest-Cure" experiences—when the whole village recognized me and turned out to greet me, I said, "Half a minute! You didn't tell 'em who I was, did you?" "Not a bit of it," replied my friend. "Trust me for that. I merely wired, 'Coming down to-night with old friend. Who is the man who knows a thing or two? Me!'" Here he struck an attitude and smote his heart so convincingly that he knocked himself through the door and down the stairs outside into the arms of a bevy of chorus ladies, and it was some time before my dresser could persuade him to return. I know I keep on saying it, but I ought to have known better. Fancy trusting oneself to the care of such a man. Particularly when one has—as in my case—a life-long reputation for doing the virtuous thing by instinct. I admit I may have been swayed by his highly-coloured description of the fair ladies who were to be at the house-party and of how they would languish unnoticed owing to the absence of the opposite sex. I admit this, for I am only human. I admit, too, that his description of the wines stored in the vasty dungeons 'neath the mansion helped to persuade me. His graphic tale of how the turkey slipped from the bone when he showed it the knife was in happy contrast to the difficulty I had experienced in removing my fork from the steak I'd had for lunch. I admit all this, and I am quite prepared to say that the love I evinced for the snow and other uncomfortable items usually associated with a good old-fashioned Christmas was more forced than sincere.

Anyhow, to cut a long story short, I agreed to go, and in order not to be recognized I decided to adopt the make-up of an Italian opera singer. "Don't forget," I said, "I am Signor Semolino from the Royal Opera, Milano." You see, I

wasn't going to have my Christmas spoiled by having to be funny all the time.

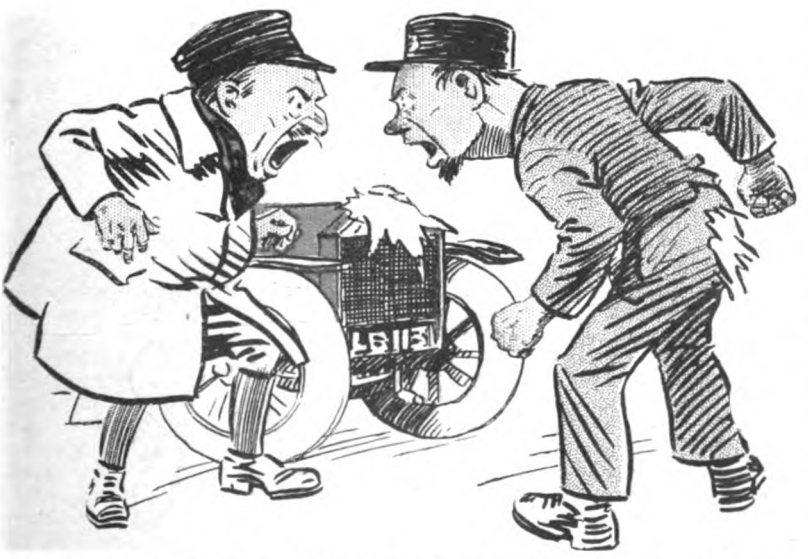
Well, away we went in a taxi to the station. Somebody must have told the driver it was Christmas Eve. I wish they hadn't. We shouldn't have had that indelicate argument with the porter. I would have backed our driver against all comers for language, but the porter beat him easily. He could give him fifty yards start in a hundred at invective and then lose him. Mind you, the porter had more to spur him on, so to speak. It's so easy to express oneself tersely when a part of one's nether garments is hanging on the radiator of the other person's taxi. Still the porter, even in repose, must be pretty useful.

Then we got into the train. It was a nice train. I use the past tense advisedly. I know it wasn't Stephenson's *first* train because I've seen that in a museum somewhere, but I'll swear it was his *second* effort. It was replete with every modern inconvenience. Lovely hot water bottles. They had frozen water in them, otherwise they were very successful. I'm afraid I wasn't very communicative going down in the train. When in my wild and irresponsible youth I used to sit and hold hands with the maid of my most recent choice she would look up at me with the expression of a sympathetic cod and say, "Aren't your hands cold, George, darling? But there, cold hands—warm heart." All I can say is that if the same thing applies to cold feet my heart was a roaring furnace. Although I hadn't much to say my friend had. He took a sudden fancy to me. The cold air had finished the good work commenced by the "pre-war," and in the vulgar parlance of the plebeian he was "well away." He burst into salt tears of gratitude at my honouring his Christmas party with my presence. Then he went into a recital of his past and my feet got warmer. Then at last we arrived. By a quick mental calculation of the average speed of the train and the distance we had to travel I came to the conclusion that we should arrive on Boxing Day. But no, it was still Christmas Eve when we got there.

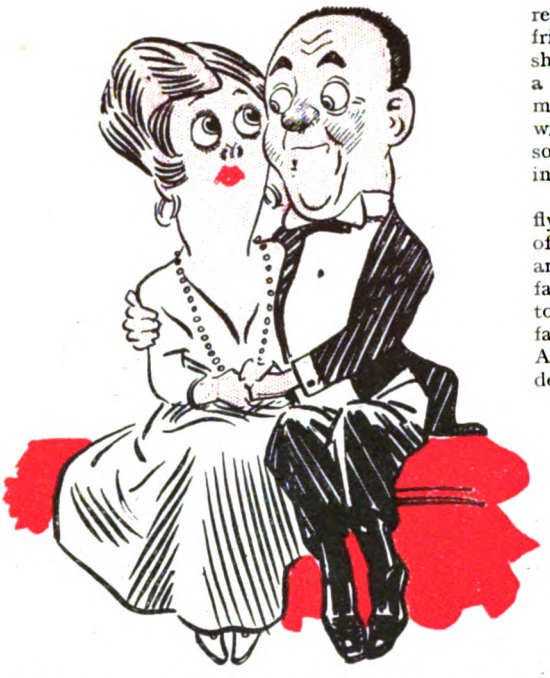
And what of my friend? He, forsooth, was passing merry. He introduced me to all the porters on the station, "My old friend, Signor Spaghetto, the great—hic—shinger. Shing 'em a shong, George! Go on, be a sport!" It was with the greatest difficulty that I dodged complying, but at last I got him away. I knew I'd be right about that snow. Snow is quite all right in its place—on Christmas-cards. Snow in reality even is not so bad when it's young, but this snow was old. In fact, it was positively senile. Well, the fact is—it was slush.

My friend waxed merrier and more sentimental on the way to his home, and I must admit that, except when he quoted Omar Khayyám, he was not uninteresting. We had walked for about half an hour—my friend was leaning more and more heavily at every step—when it occurred to me that he had not spoken for some minutes. I stopped and propped him against a fence and looked into his face. He was fast asleep! I had many unsuccessful attempts at rousing him, and at last he woke. That's the only time I've ever known my penknife to be sharp enough for any purpose at all.

He pulled himself together, looked me straight in the face, and gurgled, "S'all right, Minnie; s'all right, old dear! Only had—hic—one small port. Shign pledge to-morrow. Shign half—hic—dozen pledges, if y'like!" After proving conclusively, with the help of a straight left, that I wasn't Minnie, I asked him where we were. He looked round with the air of a man who is but mildly interested in his environment and said, "S'funny. I'm lost!" Now I put it to you, could *you* have seen anything funny in being lost in the wildest bit of country this side of Uxbridge, with a man for a guide who knew as much about the geography of the place as a politician knows about politics? However, just as I gave up all hope of getting there, my friend became suddenly and frantically joyful. "Ah, the—hic—lights of the old—hic—homestead!" And there, sure enough, through the



"IT'S SO EASY TO EXPRESS ONE'S SELF TERSELY WHEN A PART OF ONE'S NETHER GARMENTS IS HANGING ON THE RADIATOR OF THE OTHER PERSON'S TAXI."



"SHE WOULD LOOK AT ME WITH THE EXPRESSION OF A SYMPATHETIC COD."

trees I saw a light. We made for it, and in response to my knock the maid asked us inside. "The party are in the drawing-room, sir," said the maid, whom I noted down as a sort of consolation prize if my mistletoe overtures with the young ladies of the party did not bear fruit. For, let me tell you, the maid was well equipped with those arts which make her sex attractive. She had an alluring face and R.S.V.P. eyes.

To proceed. I was ushered into the drawing-room and introduced to Mrs. Snaffles, the wife of my friend and guide. She looked at me with that suspicious look which is the inevitable reward of the man who sees the inebriate home. It's strange how every woman thinks her husband the only innocent lamb in the fold. All the rest of humanity is out to lead him from the proper path. However, my festive friend put things right by saying, "Cheer up—hic—old dear! S'Christmas! S'time for feasting!" Then he burst forth into a hoarse song: "Good King—hic—er—what's his name—looked out," etc. This put everybody in a good humour, and my hostess—to whom I had been introduced as "Signor—hic—I forget his name. He—hic—had one, but it—hic—dropped off"—made herself agreeable. Snaffles explained that I was the great operatic star from Salonica, in Italy, and this prompted the young ladies of the party to ask me for a song. That did it! I never felt so many changes of temperature in all my life. I went all hot and cold, then made use of my reversing gear and went cold and hot. But my friend saved the situation. He suggested we should go carol-singing. I clutched at this as a drowning man clutches at whatever drowning men do clutch at. Out we went into the night with copies of "Hark, the Herald Angels," and so on. At any rate, nobody could hear *my* voice in such a crowd.

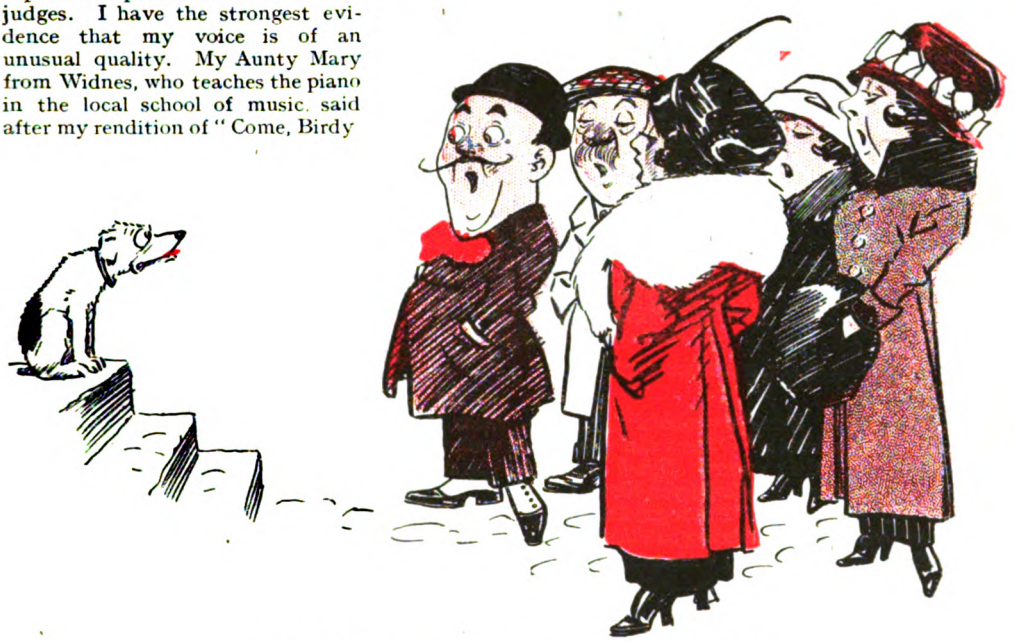
We arrived at last at an old mansion and we let fly. So did he. "He" was apparently the owner of the mansion. It was two o'clock in the morning, and "he," possibly, had every reason to find fault with our vocal efforts, but there was no need to drag my face into it. As a matter of fact, my face is not at all—but still I don't want to brag. At any rate, I disagreed with the old gentleman's description of it, particularly before ladies, and in a few well-turned phrases I told him so. He replied, and, I regret to say, lost control of himself, and that is how he lost his hot-water jug.

Luckily it just mised me, but it caught my friend Snaffles what I believe low fighting men term a "dough-boy." It sobered him sufficiently to enable him to take the address of the house, with a promise to return later *without* the ladies and show the old gentleman "how battles are fought and won."

And so away to the next house. Their dog sat on the door-step barking until we commenced to sing. Then it stopped. In the semi-darkness I could see its eyes gleaming, as near as I can possibly

"LUCKILY, IT JUST MISSED ME."

remember, like two red-hot cinders. We haven't had any coal for years, and my memory is dim. At any rate, the dog never took his eyes off my face. It sat motionless. That, thought I, shows the power of good music even over dumb animals. When we had finished I leaned down and stroked the dog. It was dead. That is all I propose to say about that. Certain common persons have tried to make me responsible for the dog's death. I don't wish to argue. I only know that my voice has called forth rapturous praise from the best judges. I have the strongest evidence that my voice is of an unusual quality. My Aunty Mary from Widnes, who teaches the piano in the local school of music, said after my rendition of "Come, Birdy



"THE DOG NEVER TOOK HIS EYES OFF MY FACE."

Come" at one of our family reunions that my voice was—still, we don't want to go into that. I paid the bill for the dog, which, it appears, was a very valuable one; and that, as far as I am concerned, closes the incident. At any rate, it was a painless death, and that's that!

I think I'll draw a veil over the rest of our vocal efforts. Only on one occasion did we meet with any semblance of success. We had been singing outside a row of houses, when we perceived somebody coming downstairs with a lighted candle in a house in the centre of the block. The door opened and the kindly voice of a dear old chap invited us in. He didn't seem a bit upset at having to come down in the early hours in his dressing-gown. He gave us port wine. It wasn't exactly an old wine. Its vintage was, as far as I could judge, about 1938, but, anyhow, it reflected the right spirit. Then he begged us to sing just one more carol. We did. Then he asked for another, and so on until we must have gone through our limited repertoire a dozen times. At last we said we must be going. I was the last to leave, and as I stood in the porch I distinctly heard the old gentleman bang on the wall and shout to the people next door: "Get on with that! That'll teach your daughter not to thump the piano till midnight." I didn't tell the others. I am used to these rebuffs and can bear them, but others are, perhaps, more sensitive.

And so to bed. My bedroom was next to the bathroom. There may have been a subtle suggestion about this. I don't know. I hope not, sincerely I hope not. What with the strain of keeping up my Italian accent and the lateness of the hour I was soon in the throes of Morpheus—(I think that's the name of the fellow). I removed the Italian moustache, as it tickled my nose, and I kept waking myself up with laughing. Well, I'd just got to sleep when a voice from the bathroom woke me. I looked out of the window, and the day was breaking as if it was half ashamed of itself. So it should have been. It was raining in a half-convinced way and there was a green fog. To add to my miseries the voice from the bathroom was singing, "Somewhere the Sun is Shining." It might have been, but my head would have debarred me from enjoying it. Now I've nothing to say against a man who gets a little over the line on Christmas Eve. Christmas comes but once a year, etc. But I loathe the man who can get up next morning after only a couple of hours' sleep, bubbling over with aggressive health, and inform a disbelieving public that Good Old King Sol is out and about in another clime when all the meteorological evidence is against him. That's what my friend was doing. I shuddered. Yes, I'll bet he was having a cold bath, too. Oo-oh! I snuggled under the bed-clothes.

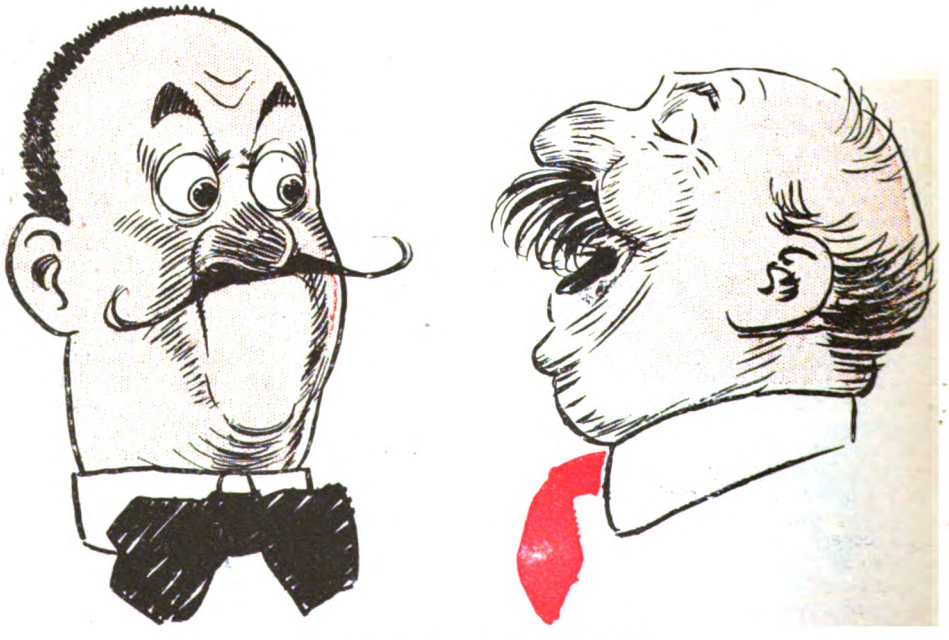
"I PAINTED MY UPPER LIP."

"Cold water, sir. Sorry we couldn't get any 'ot, sir, the boiler's bust!" 'Twas the voice of the chambermaid. Cold water! Ugh! Fancy shaving in cold water! "Would you like a cold bath, sir?" "Yes, please!" I thought I'd better have it. I never remember being so thirsty.

I won't harass your feelings with a description of my shave. It was just as if I had pulled each bristle out separately. And I wanted to have a smooth face for a reason that will be obvious to the most innocent of you. I found my moustache, and then an awful truth dawned on me. I hadn't brought the spirit-gum to fix it on with. I knocked at the bathroom wall and my friend came in. "Halloa, old son!" he said, cheerily; "the country air's the thing, my lad. Makes you feel full of beans!" And he slapped me violently on the back in a way that was calculated to empty me of any beans that I happened to have. As I didn't happen to have any it was quite all right.

I explained the position with regard to my hirsute appendage. "Oh, that's all right!" said my criminally-cheerful friend. "I've got some fish-glue downstairs. Half a minute!" A little later he returned with the fish-glue. "Use plenty of it," he said; "a little's no good." So I painted my upper lip with a large and shaggy brush he supplied and placed the moustache in position. Have you ever smelt fish-glue? I mean *really* smelt it. Not one of those fleeting sniffs; a really good long one. If you have I feel that you will agree with me that under the nose is approximately three miles too close to have it. And so I was condemned to walk about with that under my nose all day! What a prospect!

"Rotten luck!" said Snaffles; "but these things will happen. Afraid it'll take a couple of hours to dry! Lie down on your back—it'll save you holding your moustache on. See you



"HE ROARED WITH LAUGHTER."

"UTTERING THE ONE WORD 'BILLINGSGATE,' SHE FAINTED."

later!" And that's how I missed breakfast. I was pleased to lie down. I *was* tired.

The next thing I remember was my friend shaking me. "Come on, old son, I've got a job for you. Nobody knows how to pluck the turkey. Make you no end of a hero with the ladies!" I was just going to protest when I discovered another awful truth. The fish-glue had run and my lips were stuck firmly together. Oh, the mute agony of that tragic moment! Just when I had got the vocabulary to express my opinion of my friend and the mood to use it my lips were sealed. I did my best to convey my sentiments by signs, but I'm afraid it had no effect. My friend mistook it for my morning calisthenics. At last I managed to explain the position, which gave him another opportunity to display his distorted sense of humour. He roared with laughter, and when he gained sufficient control over himself he held his hand out in the most approved musical-comedy-lover style and sang, "If Those Lips Could Only Speak." He didn't suspect what would have happened if they could have spoken. While he went for the methylated spirits I calmed myself down sufficiently to be fairly amiable to him. I've heard of men who could get nothing else drinking methylated spirits for the sake of the alcohol it contains. All I can say is that if I am left in charge of a barrel of it in the middle of the Sahara on a hot day it will be quite safe in my charge. It's all very well for spirit lamps, but as a beverage Stephens's ink has got it well beaten. However, we got my lips apart, and armed with more confidence than knowledge I proceeded to the pantry to pluck the turkey. I won't bore you with a recital of the difficulties connected with removing the feathers from birds. You've probably had some. I swear that bird was alive. The way it jumped from the table to the floor and from the floor to the sink proves this. However, it made me popular with the girls. And one or two of them were of quite a pleasing appearance.

Then we had dinner. I waited to see my friend "show the turkey the knife," but I think the bird had been warned beforehand. It didn't "slip from the bone" according to plan, but it certainly did slip from the table. It landed in my lap and spoilt a nice new pair of trousers. It was very distressing to see that pet pair of leg garments—they had been specially modelled in Savile Row—utterly ruined. If I had chosen a colour that went well with turkey fat it wouldn't have been so bad, but stains are so obvious on a large check. However, the sympathy I got from the sweet maid on my left compensated me.

At last, after an interminable meal, we retired to the drawing-room. "Let's play 'Postman's Knock,'" said my partner at dinner. "I'll start." And she went out into the hall. Snaffles acted as doorkeeper. Presently a nervous knock came at the door. Snaffles opened it, and the girl whispered in his ear, "Four, for Signor Semolino," said Snaffles. Oh, how my heart beat! Was it really true that in a few moments I should be holding that sweet young thing in my arms? I meant at all costs to lose count

"I SWEAR THAT BIRD WAS ALIVE."

and make that "four" into as many as I could before she stopped me. Oh, I know it was wrong of me to try to cheat, but there! The girl was attractive and I was weak. I can't say more. When I got into the hall and the door was closed I held the darling's face between my trembling hands and, fixing her with as near to an hypnotic gaze as I can manage and drawing her lips to mine, I—— Must I admit it? Haven't you ever played "Postman's Knock"? Come now! Tell the truth! Ah, I thought so! I had scarcely finished planting the first kiss on her all-too-willing lips when an awful thing happened. Her eyeballs rolled wildly, and uttering the one word "Billingsgate," she fainted. "Billingsgate?" I wondered. What on earth did she mean? Anyhow, we brought her round, and somewhat puzzled I re-entered the room, and another maiden scarcely less fair took up the running. She also asked for me, and this time the number was six. Again the same thing occurred. With a stifled groan and the one word "Billingsgate" she went off into a swoon. This, of course, apart from the distressing effect on the ladies, was a great disappointment to me. I puzzled my brains to find out the cause of these distressing symptoms, when the horrid truth dawned on me. I had become acclimatized, if not reconciled, to the smell of the fish-glue, but the young ladies had had it thrust upon them without warning in all its frightfulness. Hence "Billingsgate." I was a walking fish-market! What a fate! It was terrible. We restored my latest victim into some semblance of normal activity and returned to the drawing-room, and I noticed that the two young ladies were decidedly icy in their manner towards me. Apart from them the company was still kindly disposed.

The evening sped along its uneventful course until in a lull in the proceedings one sweet but unwittingly cruel maiden suggested that I should sing. The wine had been plentiful and good, and in a confident manner I promised to sing "On with the Motley," from "Pagliacci." As a special favour they asked me to sing it in English, so that they could understand it. I think I have mentioned that I—not without reason—rather pride myself on my abilities as a vocalist. Well, I never felt in better tune, so away we went. I had just got to that pathetic bit, "Laugh, Punchinello," when the maid I had held in reserve, so to speak, entered with a tray laden with the good things of this earth. Now, I do like to be held in esteem by the menials, and it was therefore very distressing to me to see the maid drop the tray on my best note and sink laughing to the floor. Very distressing. It quite spoilt the song, and with a broken-English apology I resumed my seat. While I was singing I had noticed a certain young lady hiding behind an old newspaper. The paper was shaking in a way that suggested merriment. I only suspect this; I make no allegation. A little later I noticed this female look first at the paper and then at me. She laid the newspaper aside and went into a remote corner and whispered to her friends. I took advantage of this to glance at the page she had been studying, and then I understood. There in bold type I saw: "Adventurer at Large. Criminal who Poses as an Italian Opera Singer."

"TO SEE THE MAID DROP THE TRAY ON MY BEST NOTE."

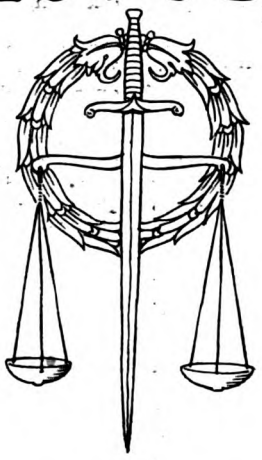
It then described the method of this impostor, which was to get by hook or by crook invitations to country-house parties and remove any valuables that came in his way. So that was it, was it? I crept out and bolted for the station. Luckily I had only four hours to wait for a train. How my friend squared matters up I don't know. It may sound heartless of me, but I care not either.

Just a word of advice. If you ever have anything that wants sticking use fish-glue. I shall carry the scars where I removed that moustache to my grave. I shall also carry a happy memory of two sweet maids who nearly kissed me, and a fierce desire to end the life of Snaffles by any but natural means.

Self-Convicted

By Arthur Caighton

Illustrated by Christopher Clark, R.I.



"YOU feel certain he is the man?"

"Quite certain. I had no doubt in my own mind at the time that Mr. Grool was found dead, shot through the head, six years ago; and I have never felt any doubt since. Ever since then I have been trying to discover where Marde had flown to. I suspected he had gone to America, and it was there that I pursued my inquiries. For a long time I made no headway and could hear nothing of the man; he seemed to have utterly vanished. But, at last, by one of those apparent strokes of chance that seem so incredible when utilized by a novelist, I was brought into actual contact with him, and since then I have drawn the net closely round him."

"But can you prove his guilt?"

"No: there is not circumstantial evidence enough for that, but I have made my own arrangements. He is going to confess."

"Oh, come now!" said Cruden, leaning back in his chair with a smile, and slowly puffing at his cigar. "You are up against a very tough proposition in a civilized country. Racks and thumbscrews are a bit out of date now, you know, and to make a man confess to a murder six years after it has taken place—well, it wants doing, doesn't it?"

"You're right; it does want doing, but it's going to be done all the same. Look here, Grool was my friend, my benefactor—my preserver. To that man I owe all that I am and all that I shall be. When he was cruelly murdered I swore I would never rest till I had brought his murderer to justice. I swore it over his dead body, and then and there I thought out the plan which, if ever I met the man I believed had done the deed, should suffice to bring him to justice. At last I have found him, and before many hours have passed he is going to convict himself out of his own mouth."

Cruden looked puzzled. "But how? I can't see how you can possibly force him to confess if he is determined to keep silent. Of course you would not do anything that is illegal?"

"I shall keep entirely within the law. I think you will admit that I am doing nothing reprehensible in asking a man to walk into a bare room and sit down on a seat for ten minutes or so."

Cruden looked at his friend as if he had begun to entertain suspicions of his sanity. Then, as if struck by a thought, he said:—

"Nothing queer about the chair, I suppose? No electric current, or anything of that sort?"

"Certainly not; the man will be subjected to no physical inconvenience at all. It will be an ordinary plain chair and it will be placed in a room which contains nothing else whatever. You may judge of the bareness of the room when I say that it contains no carpet or linoleum and no paper on the walls, which are simply whitewashed."

"But if there's only one chair how will you manage? I presume your idea is to go in with him and by your conversation and questions get him to ensnare himself? Perhaps you intend to stand up, though?"

"I sha'n't be there. He will go into the room alone, sit down on the chair, and then will come an interval in which not a word will be spoken. I shall remain in the adjoining room, in which, meanwhile, I have hidden two members of the police force. According to my calculations, in less than ten minutes Marde will stagger into the

room where I am and voluntarily confess his crime."

"Well, you amaze me, Stanton, and if I didn't know you for a truthful man I should think you were romancing. Do you mean to say that nothing will be done in that room?"

"Nothing will be done in that room at all."

"Is it to be kept in darkness?"

"No; directly he is seated the room will be lighted up."

"Perhaps something in the brilliant lighting to dazzle him, eh?"

"Oh, no; I told you I should not cause him any physical inconvenience. Cruden, when I strike, I shall strike the man to the very pith and core of his soul. He shall come forth shrieking 'I did it, I killed him, I killed him! Yes, Cruden, I swore a sacred oath six years ago, and, by God, I mean to keep it."

"Is it anything in the way of hypnotism or mesmerism?"

"Nothing of that kind at all. Look here, my friend, I think we all have some belief in a Day of Judgment, when our sins shall be revealed to us in all their naked reality. I mean to forestall this man's Day of Judgment. He will learn that, cunning as he has been in leaving no clue by which his crime may be brought home to him, there has been one as cunning as himself on his trail. Never in the history of the world has any human being undergone what this man will have to undergo."

Cruden remained lost in thought for some minutes, and then, speaking slowly, he said:—

"You have aroused my curiosity exceedingly, Stanton, and it is beyond me to guess what your intentions are. If you were not such a sceptic on spiritualistic phenomena, I should be half inclined to believe you were intending something in that way."

"Nothing is further from my thoughts, I can assure you. You might guess for years and not arrive at the truth."

"I wish I could be with you at the time and see for myself whether what you predict comes to pass."

"Well, there is no difficulty about that if you do not object to remaining hidden. I have erected a partition behind which the two police officers I spoke of are to remain, seeing but unseen. As a friend of mine they would not mind you being with them—would you care to?"

"I should indeed, and you can rely on me to use all discretion."

"Keep perfectly quiet, that is the chief thing. You will see me enter the room in which the single chair is placed. Directly he is seated I shall come out, and gently dropping the latch wait till the time has arrived for him to emerge again."

"And when he comes out he will confess?"

"That is my firm conviction. If not, then my knowledge of human nature is entirely at fault. I have had time to study this man, and I think I can accurately estimate the effect that various ordeals would have upon him. If suspicion of being suspected were allowed to slowly evolve in his mind, the man would never give himself away. With his type it is the unexpected, the sudden, the horrible, that unnerves and temporarily paralyses the instinct of self-protection. In a few weeks' time he may curse himself for being a weak fool, but to-morrow—well, you shall see. Come round to this address at three o'clock to-morrow afternoon."

Saying which Stanton handed a piece of paper with an address written on it to his friend, and then after a few more words shook hands and parted.

Shortly before three o'clock the next afternoon Cruden made his way towards the house in question, which was situated in a quiet square in the suburbs. It was not long before he was ascending the steps that led to the front door. Before he had time to ring or knock it was opened, and with a movement indicating caution Stanton ushered him into the hall.

Following his friend he soon found himself in a sparsely furnished room which looked as if it might have been utilized by a caretaker. Evidently the building was unoccupied. Stanton explained in a subdued voice that the house belonged to him, and some little time before had become vacant.

"I could have obtained a tenant several months ago," he added, "but as this house was very suitable for the purpose I have in view, I preferred to leave it empty for the time being. You notice that wooden partition at the end? Well, two stalwart representatives of the law are ensconced there, where they can hear everything and see all that goes on in this room. You shall join them directly, but, first of all, no doubt you would like to see the room that I told you of?"

"I am extremely curious to do so."

"Well, this is it. It opens, as you see, out of this room, and this door by which we enter is in full view of our two police friends, who, I may as well whisper to you in confidence, are by no means sanguine as to the results of my experiment. In fact, I think they are rather inclined to put me down as a well-meaning, but rather crazy, enthusiast, who has probably brought them on a fool's errand."

"They know all about the case, of course?"

"They know as much as I do. They know that my old friend Grool was murdered six years ago, and that his murderer was never found. They have questioned me closely as to the motive, but as I have only surmise on that point, I did not go into it with them. I am content to extract confession first; it will be time enough to get at the motive afterwards."

All this had been spoken in a very low tone, almost a whisper, as Stanton stood with his hand on the door of the room which seemed so unaccountably mysterious. Turning the handle he entered, and Cruden followed. The two men found themselves in a room about eighteen feet by fourteen feet, a room answering correctly to the description Stanton had given of it, for it was entirely bare. If it had ever had a wall paper there was no sign of it now, for the walls and ceiling were practically alike. The only

object in the room was a wooden chair of a common pattern which was standing with the back to the wall at the farther end. With feelings of intense curiosity Cruden examined the room, and a look of astonishment came into his face when he found nothing that could in the smallest degree be considered likely to have a disturbing effect on any human being. He stole a glance at his friend, wondering whether after all the latter was the victim of an illusion. The resolute features and steady eyes betrayed no symptoms of an unbalanced mind, and he could not doubt that Stanton's plan was a real and practicable one, however impossible it seemed of fulfilment. He went to the window and examined it, but it differed in no way from the windows generally found in houses of that kind, and, moreover, it was obvious by the woodwork that it had remained untouched for years. There were two wooden shutters inside which folded back out of the way, and though he pulled these to, the only effect was to darken the room. Suddenly a thought struck him, and turning to Stanton he said :—

"Whatever it is that is to happen here, it is to my mind a certainty that this window contains the secret."

"Do you think so ?"

"I am sure of it, for I have felt and examined the walls, and the ceiling is just an ordinary ceiling, while, as for the floor, it is apparent that it is just as it was when it was first put down. Thus, by a process of elimination, only the window is left, and it does not require the logic of a Locke to state that if your plan is to succeed it can only be with its aid. My impression is that something or somebody will come through that window."

"Your impression is a wrong one, and besides, the window is securely fastened."

"Well, then, something or somebody will appear *at* the window and startle the man so much that you count on him confessing the crime which must—if he has committed it—always be present subconsciously with him."

"Again you are wrong, and to prove that he will not be frightened by anything at the window, I may tell you that I shall pull the shutters to when he is here, so that he is in quite a dim, religious light ; such as one may find in the deeper shades of some old cathedral."

"Then what on earth do you intend doing ? I tell you, Stanton, the whole thing is utterly beyond me. If I had not known you so long I should be inclined to question your sanity ; as it is, I know you have solid and substantial reasons for your assertions. But what is to happen here I can no more imagine than I can imagine what sort of people there may be in Mars."

"If you remember, that is exactly what I told you. I said you might guess for years and not arrive at the truth. But don't be impatient ; I hope that before another hour has passed you will know as much as I do. Let us return to the other room, for the time is almost due for Marde's arrival."

With an air of perplexity Cruden followed his friend into the room adjacent, and in a very few moments, after a brief introduction to the two police officers, he was securely hidden behind the partition.

A few minutes later the door bell rang, and with a whispered word of caution to the three men Stanton left the room and proceeded into the hall. On opening the street door he found at the top of the steps a man rather under middle age, well dressed and betraying every sign of worldly prosperity. To the casual observer he might have passed as a man free from worry or anxiety, but those whom experience had given greater powers of penetration would have found something in the lines of his face and his over-accentuated air of ease, suggestive of less repose than he was evidently desirous of conveying. The man who *acts* in his daily life will invariably betray the fact in course of time, however successful he may be in casual intercourse in maintaining the pose he has adopted. With an air of heartiness which, however, did not deceive Stanton, Marde ejaculated :—

"Well, here I am, Mr. Stanton. Punctual to the minute, eh ? Always like to be on time when I have made an appointment."

"Quite right," murmured Stanton, leading the way into the hall. "No doubt you are feeling rather curious as to why I asked you to meet me here instead of at my own home ?"

"Well, yes, I am. Seems to me this house is empty. Your property, I suppose ?"

"Yes, this house is mine, and was vacated a few months ago. I am anxious to try a little experiment, and knowing the experiences you have had I thought I should like to have your opinion. You do not object ?"

"Certainly not ; any advice I can give you, you are welcome to. What sort of an experiment, may I ask ?"

"Well, I cannot at present describe it to you. As a matter of fact, its success depends largely on your not knowing beforehand what I am about to do."

Marde looked puzzled for a moment, but then as it the detail was of small moment, he said :—

"Oh, well let it be as you wish, Mr. Stanton. Tell me what I am to do and I will do it."

"Then come this way, please," replied the latter, leading the way through the room in which the three eavesdroppers lay concealed, and opening the door of the inner room. Marde followed him, and when he was inside looked round the chamber with a rather doubtful expression on his face. It was obvious that he was somewhat nonplussed at finding himself in such a bare compartment.

"Scarcely over-furnished, eh ?" he remarked, with an attempt at joviality. "Not even a table. But there, you know your own business best, I suppose. I presume this is where the experiment is to take place ?"

"Yes ; and I may as well inform you that it is something that has never been attempted before. I am feeling very sure of success, but without you here, I could not hope to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion. Without going into the matter further, I want to ask you to sit

down in that chair and not move till I return. I have something I must attend to first elsewhere, but I shall not be long gone."

"As you like," muttered Marde, the perplexity deepening on his brow. "I'll sit here, till I know what else you want me to do." With this he plumped himself down into the chair and, leaning back, crossed his legs as if prepared to recline there for hours, if necessary.

When he was seated Stanton went to the window, and muttering something about "curious neighbours" and "being overlooked," pulled the shutters to, so that the room was in semi-darkness. Then, with a final word of assurance to Marde, he passed through the open doorway. Having regained the room in which Cruden and the two policemen were hidden, his first step was to secure the door he had just closed. Stepping softly to the partition he whispered :—

"In a minute my experiment will commence. Keep still and watch," then he vanished into the hall. Almost immediately afterwards a strange humming or whirring noise could be distinctly heard from some room in the house.

"What's that?" whispered one of the policemen to his mate.

"Sounds like one of those ventilating machines," replied the other, "or maybe it's an engine at work somewhere near. Where's Mr. Stanton gone to, I wonder?"

"Don't know, I'm sure. This is a rum go, Bill, and no mistake."

"The rummiest I ever saw. Seems to me we're going to make laughing-stocks of ourselves over this business. Confess murder indeed! Why, that man in there is as likely to confess he killed Queen Anne as—as—that old Grool. But there's Mr. Stanton back again. Blowed if he ain't standing by that door like a terrier waiting for a rat. Quite likely he's gone off his dot. What do you say, sir?"

"I say—the best thing is to keep silent and watch," whispered Cruden in reply. "Mr. Stanton is not the man to go to all this trouble for nothing. Keep still, and listen."

His remark had effect and the whispering ceased. For a space not a sound could be heard save the strange, half-muffled sound that the policeman had likened to a ventilator. Mr. Stanton stood with his hand on the door of the inner room, a look of great expectancy on his face. Suddenly he straightened himself and took a fresh grip on the latch as if ready to slip it back and open the door. For a moment he stood tense and alert, and then resumed his half-bent, listening attitude. Another minute slowly passed by, and then suddenly, without warning, there issued from the room in which Marde had been left sitting a cry—a cry impossible to describe. It was startling in its intensity and note of horror. The cry of a coyote heard in the still Northern forests at night makes one think of the cry ot a lost spirit, but this cry from the bare chamber was more vivid even than that of a coyote. It was the cry of a man in indescribable anguish of soul. It penetrated to the three men concealed behind the partition and brought them to their feet instantly, and they would have come out into the room had not Mr. Stanton, with a quick gesture, motioned to them to remain where they were. With eager eyes they gazed through the gaps in the boarding, hardly knowing what to expect. They were not kept long in suspense, for suddenly they saw Mr. Stanton pull the latch and throw the door open. In another moment Marde staggered into the room, his face livid with horror, while a strange, moaning sound issued from his lips. His eyes were glaring in a manner painful to witness, and his whole frame seemed to quiver as if some frightful shock had unbalanced his nervous system. Suddenly Stanton gripped him by the arm, and looking him full in the eyes said, sternly :—

"What is it you are going to say to me?"

Marde passed his hand across his brow and pulled at his collar as if it were choking him, and then in jerky, almost incoherent, phrases he cried :—

"I killed him. Yes, it's true, God help me! I killed him."

"You killed whom?"

"Mr. Grool—I killed him six years ago. Oh, let me die—let me die!" He sank on to the ground and buried his face in his arms.

Mr. Stanton went down on one knee and half-turning Marde over, he said : "You killed him for revenge?"

"Yes—yes!" moaned the unhappy man. "Because he'd found out too much about me, and threatened to warn other people who had dealings with me. I knew he meant to ruin me—so I—I killed him."

"How did you kill him?"

"I shot him!"

"As he was walking to his home?"

"Yes—it was a dark night and I hid behind a wall which he always passed. Nobody saw it, nobody knew who had done it, and yet—yet, what does it all mean? By heavens! *you* knew it."

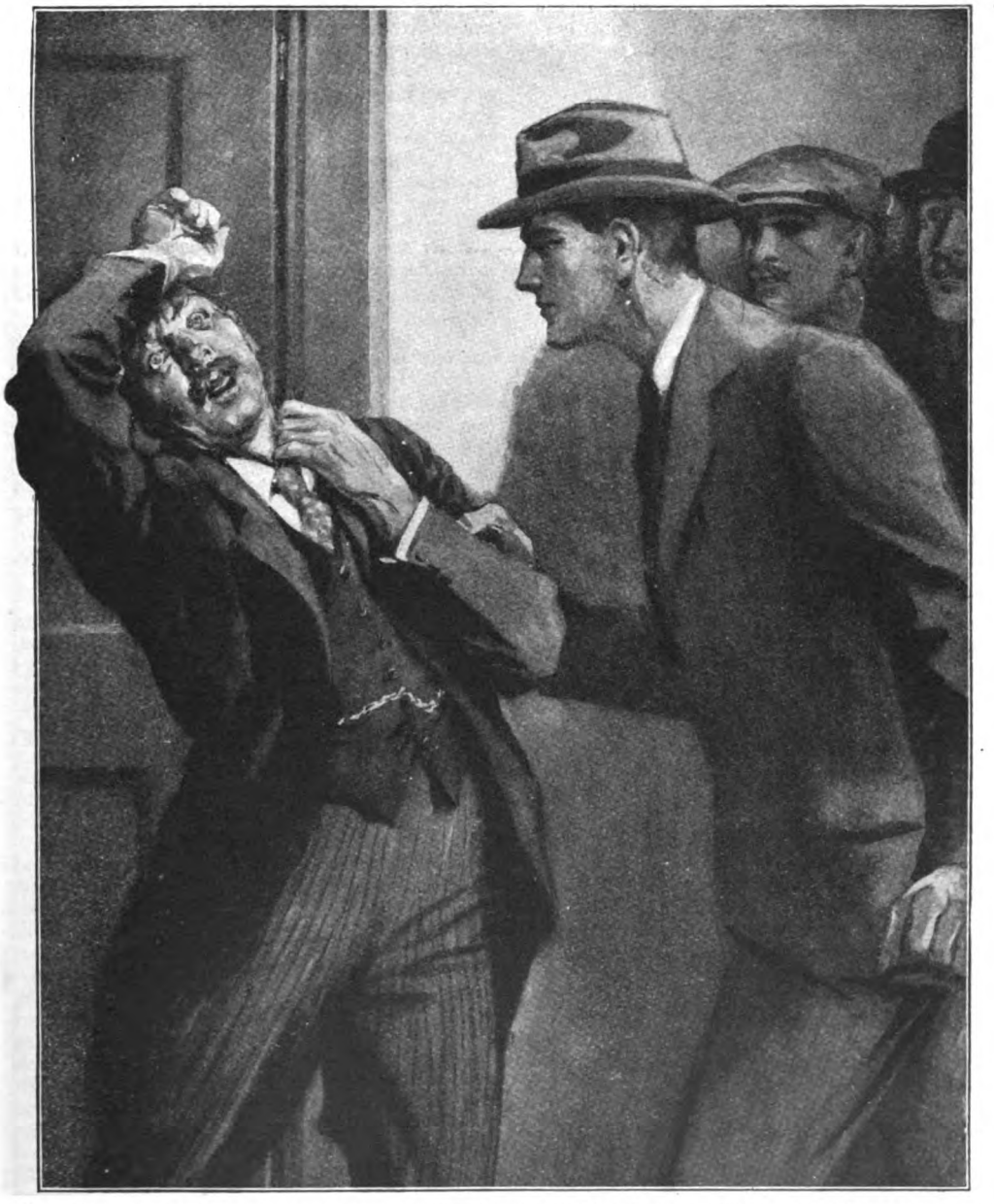
"Yes, I knew it. I could never get anybody else to see the same as I did; it was merely a word or two—a shrug of the shoulders when Grool mentioned you to me a week before his death, but it was sufficient to show me the guilty one. You left no clue, there was not the slightest evidence to prove you were the murderer, but I was sure in my own mind that you had done it. You went abroad soon afterwards and I was a long time getting on your track, but I succeeded at last. Yes, and I had made all arrangements for certain matters to go on during my absence. The long arm of Justice has grasped you at last. Jones!"

"Yes, sir!" replied one of the policemen, coming forward.

"I give this man into your charge. You have heard all that has passed?"

"I have indeed, sir, and sorry I am that I doubted you."

The other policeman and Cruden issued from their hiding-place, and it was not long before Marde was on his way to the police-station. All power of resistance seemed to have gone



"IN JERKY, ALMOST INCOHERENT, PHRASES HE CRIED: 'I KILLED HIM. YES, IT'S TRUE, GOD HELP ME! I KILLED HIM.'"

from the man, he was completely unnerved, and went away with his captors as quietly as possible.

No sooner had the outer door closed on the three than Cruden, turning to his friend, said :—

"What is the explanation of it all? I am mystified beyond measure how you have managed to extract a confession from him. May I go into the room and see for myself?"

"Certainly," replied his friend, and suiting the action to the word he led the way into the chamber which had had such an effect on Marde. The shutters were still drawn together, but Stanton in a moment had thrown them back, allowing the full light of day to penetrate into the room. Cruden glanced hurriedly around and then gave vent to a cry of astonishment. There was nothing to be seen except the chair still standing against the wall, the room was as

bare and empty as when he had first gone into it.

"Well, this is the strangest thing I ever heard of!" he ejaculated at length. "What on earth could have frightened the man so, I cannot imagine."

"No, it is not easily imagined," replied Stanton, "and I am not at all surprised that you are puzzled. I presume you are very anxious to have the mystery cleared up."

"I'm afraid I should be racking my brains all night striving to find an explanation unless you do so," said Cruden.

"Well, then, I will end your bewilderment as soon as possible. Now, will you closely scan the centre of the wall behind the chair—about two feet from the ceiling? Do you notice anything?"

Cruden turned his eyes to the spot indicated, and after gazing hard for a short space he said:—

"I fancy I can see a square marked on the wall. It is very faint, but it certainly looks like it."

"You are quite right," replied his friend, "only it is not a mark on the wall. It is where a small door is fitted which opens inwardly."

"Into another room?"

"Yes, the room beyond this. It is the only alteration that has been made in this one, and it fits so closely that it is only observable when attention is drawn to it."

"Then something came through the hole when it was open, is that it?"

"If you will wait a moment I will satisfy your curiosity entirely. You shall go through the same experience that Marde did."

"But not with such distressing results, I hope?"

"I don't think you need fear that. For one thing, I believe I know you well enough to feel a tolerable degree of certainty that your conscience is as clear as my own. And apart from that, what we are about to witness could have a terrifying effect on one man alone, and that is Marde."

"It certainly had that effect; but don't delay longer, Stanton, I am all curiosity to see the end of this mystery."

"Wait here till I return," said the other, hastening from the room. He had hardly been gone a minute when Cruden heard a slight noise, and turning his eyes in the direction from which it came, he saw that the door in the wall had been opened. Almost immediately afterwards Stanton re-entered the room, and motioning to his companion to sit down on the chair, he pulled the shutters to, so that the room was again in semi-darkness. But only for a moment, for suddenly a bright light streamed through the gap and illuminated the bare white wall on the farther side of the room. Then came the whirring sound that had been heard before, and as Cruden fixed his eyes on the lighted side of the chamber, without a word of warning there appeared the figure of a man. The face was portrayed in a marvellously clear manner, every line and detail being observable. But although the eyes were wide open, there was no expression in them; they remained fixed and vacant. In the centre of the man's forehead there was a hole, and from this a dark fluid had exuded and rolled down his face. It did not require much acumen to judge that the wound in the forehead was the result of a bullet, and that the face was the face of a dead man.

"Good heavens!" cried Cruden, in accents of astonishment. "It is Grool!"

"Yes," replied Stanton, "it is Grool as he was on the day he was murdered."

For a few moments Cruden gazed breathlessly at the dead man, and then with a strange feeling of nausea he saw that the picture was gradually changing.

But why dwell on the shocking scene that passed before the eyes of the two men in that room? Suffice it to say, that in a very short time nothing but that sad relic of departed humanity—a skeleton—was visible—a skeleton which beckoned with its ghostly finger to the occupant of the chair.

At length the whirring stopped, and going to the shutters Stanton threw them open, letting in the pure light of day. Then turning to Cruden, who sat with a half-dazed expression on his face, he said in a low voice:—

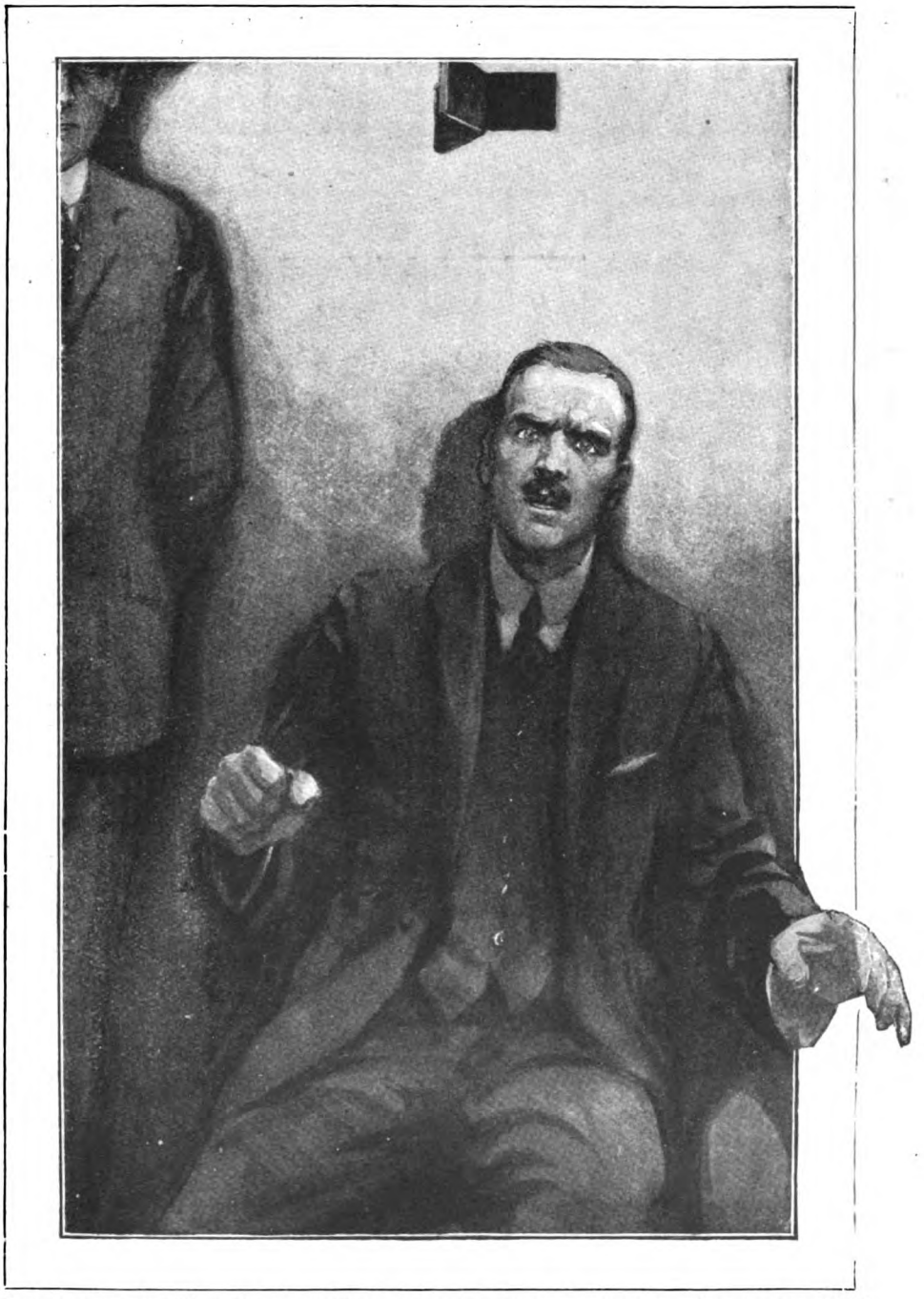
"Now you understand?"

With an effort Cruden roused himself, and in a husky voice replied: "Good heavens, Stanton, it is the most horrible thing I have ever seen! Never, on your life, allow anyone else to see what we have seen to-day."

"You may rest assured that we are the last to see the film."

"Film? Yes, of course it is a film. But the most unnerving one it has ever been my lot to witness. How ever did you come to hit upon such a plan?"

"Well, the idea occurred to me as I stood gazing at my poor friend's murdered body as it lay on the bed shortly after it had been found. I thought to myself, 'If the murderer could only be made to realize the full result of his action, then perhaps he would confess what an atrocious act he had been guilty of.' It has always been one of my convictions that certain types of men—men whose imaginative powers are atrophied, or who scarcely possess such powers, should be made, if possible, to see with their own eyes exactly what their evil deeds have wrought. The betrayer should be shown the den of infamy to which his victim has drifted, the swindling company promoter should be taken to every home where ruin has entered owing to his selfish greed. Let him hear the cries of the widows and orphans, and see the tears of the bereaved. Ah, if we had real justice in this world, Cruden, we should not be content to let the four walls of a cell or the payment of a sum of money be practically the only methods of punishing the scoundrels who make this earth a vale of woe instead of being—what it might be—a very good imitation of Heaven. But there, Marde will soon pay the penalty for his crime, so let us get away from this scene of tragic incidents as soon as possible. I have given my assistant instructions to destroy the



"'GOOD HEAVENS!' CRIED CRUDEN, IN ACCENTS IN ASTONISHMENT. 'IT IS GROOL!'"

film, and if I mistake not, that is his step in the hall. He is on his way home, and we cannot do better than follow his example."

And with his hand on the arm of his friend, Stanton passed through the door into the street and left the house, that had been the scene of such a strange event, to its solitude and silence.

Another Batch of Memories

by Sidney Dark

ILLUSTRATED BY G L. STAMPA

THERE are few real wits in any one generation and Charles Brookfield remains the one outstanding wit with whom I have been personally acquainted. Brookfield's father and mother were intimate friends of Thackeray. He was one of the first University men to go on the stage, and though he made a considerable success (he was accurately described as "a great actor of small parts"), he always had a supreme contempt for the theatre and everything connected with it. I remember one particular instance of Brookfield's ability to provide the perfect snub without a moment's hesitation. We were lunching one day at the Cavour in Leicester Square when an offensively-friendly person banged Brookfield on the back and inquired, "How are you, Charlie?" The actor looked up and at once replied, "If I knew your name, sir, I would be equally familiar."

During the later years of his life Brookfield was in constant bad health, and consequently frequently in financial straits, and this, doubtless, gave his wit its characteristic caustic note.

Brookfield once said of a rival wit that he knew he was not quite a gentleman and was always trying to laugh it off. For some reason or the other he had a particular dislike for the Grossmiths, and they were the subject for many of his gibes. On one occasion he remarked that he never knew how much he liked George Grossmith until some fellow introduced him to Weedon.

Like most good talkers, Brookfield talked far better than he wrote, and his book of reminiscences was rather disappointing. He used to tell one particularly good story against himself which is not included in the book. During one of his periods of financial stress he was doing some literary work for a German-Jewish gentleman, who at that time was a considerable theatrical power. He determined to approach the financier on the subject of an advance on account of fees, and was waiting for a really favourable opportunity. The financier suggested that they should spend a week-end together at the Métropole, Brighton, and Brookfield felt that the psychological moment had at last arrived They went down on the Saturday dined well, but, after due consideration, Brookfield decided that Sunday morning with the sun shining on the sea-front would be the ideal occasion. He rose and went down to breakfast, but his companion was not there. After breakfast he inquired at the office and was told "Oh, Mr. Brookfield, Mr. —— had a wire from London and had to go back by an early train. He said you would settle his bill."

The late Cecil Raleigh, though his humour was far coarser and less subtle than Brookfield's, occasionally said an admirably good thing. It may be remembered that in his play, "The Price of Peace," one of the characters was supposed to fall dead after making a speech in a scene representing the House of Commons. The part of the Speaker was played by a "super" with ambitions. His part was a silent one, and at one of the rehearsals he diffidently suggested to Raleigh that he ought to have two or three lines to say after the Minister had died. "Certainly," said Raleigh, "capital idea, my boy; you shall start the bob subscription for the wreath."

Edward Michael, whose varied career has included most professions, from London theatrical management to "peddling Bibles in Montana," is another man whose humour has frequently made gloomy days amusing. It was Michael who christened the old Avenue Theatre, which stood on the site now occupied by the Playhouse, and which was notorious for its innumerable draughts, "the seagulls' retreat." Michael was once manager for a season financed by a millionaire to exploit the talents of a certain lady more conspicuous for good looks than for stage ability. The season was a failure, but the millionaire was rich enough to go on. I met Michael one day in the Strand, and he said to me, "I wish you would come down and see me one evening, I am so confounded lonely in that theatre all by myself."

On another occasion the stage manager brought Michael his list of expenses at the end of a week. On it was the item, "Cab, £1 17s. 6d." "I hope you bought a good one," was Michael's comment.

I used to see Mr. Bernard Shaw fairly frequently twenty years ago, and I still have a number of letters from him which illustrate his characteristic kindly interest in the careers of men younger than himself. When Mr. Shaw was the dramatic critic of the *Saturday Review* someone remonstrated with him for the caustic criticism he passed on players and playwrights. "My dear chap," said Shaw, "if you only knew the things I think and don't write!" There is a rather nice story told of Mr. Shaw when he was living in Fitzroy Square and was writing about music in the *Star*. One morning an Italian organ-grinder was performing outside his house. The man touched his hat when Mr. Shaw went out, but the critic merely said, "Press," and walked on.

Mr. James Glover tells another capital story of Mr. Shaw and the late Augustus Harris, who, in his usual lordly manner, had barred Mr. Shaw from the Opera on account of the criticisms he had written of some of the performances. At the beginning of the next season, Mr. Glover persuaded Harris once more to send Mr. Shaw the usual Press invitation, and he took occasion to introduce the two men to each other. 'Well, Mr. Shaw," said Harris, 'whatever else you may say about my production you must admit that this year my orchestra is excellent." "You are quite right," said Shaw, "they are certainly playing much better this evening than when I last heard them on the boat going to Hampton Court."

"THE PART OF THE SPEAKER WAS PLAYED BY A 'SUPER' WITH AMBITIONS."

The anecdotage of the later Shaw has been printed to death. But in looking over my old letters I find several nice Shavian pronouncements. In one letter, Mr. Shaw declares that success on the stage is possible only "if you take the theatre seriously, and work hard, and never fail or resign or 'fluff' or lose your temper or drink or borrow half sovereigns or lend them." In another letter he says, "The rottenness of most books is due to the fact that the authors are too lazy to observe and describe the people they meet; hence romantic invention, ending in hideous monotony."

In reply to a request from me for some information about a play of his which was shortly to be produced, Mr. Shaw wrote: "The shortest way is to draft the par which you can cook up as you please. All I bargain for is that you are to give the information on your own responsibility, and not say 'we have received the following characteristic communication from Mr. G.B.S., etc., etc.'"

The story has been often told, but I shall always remember with joy that I was present at the old Avenue Theatre on the first night of "Arms and the Man," when at the end of the play Mr. Shaw, in his usual yellow Jaeger suit, came before the curtain to make a long speech to the audience. The cheering was broken by one loud booing voice from the gallery. "I am glad to find," said Mr. Shaw, "that there is one person here with sufficient intelligence to share my opinion of this play."

Some of the cheeriest days of my life were spent on the staff of the *Daily Mail*, in the days when Lord Northcliffe was still Mr. Harmsworth and the paper was still fighting to gain its great position. Most of us were very young and many of us were earning far more money than we had ever dreamed of earning, for, whatever the world may think of Lord Northcliffe, the working journalist is never likely to forget that his coming to Fleet Street meant the increase of salaries by at least fifty per cent. Our idol was Mr. Charles E. Hands, even then a journalist of established reputation, and one of the wittiest men that ever tramped along "the street of adventure." I remember spending an evening with Hands at the Empire with the late Hector Tennant, who was then its managing director. Tennant was a rather boring man with a very gloomy manner. He told Hands and me that he suffered dreadfully from

insomnia, that he had tried all sorts of remedies, but that he could find nothing that would send him to sleep. "Why don't you try talking to yourself?" suggested Hands.

The modern journalist works under infinitely greater pressure than his predecessors. When I began writing theatrical criticisms I was walking one night down to Fleet Street with the late Mr. Northcott, the theatrical critic of the *Daily Chronicle*, who told me that before he began to write his criticism he always liked to have a wash and drink a cup of tea while he was getting his thoughts in order. In the modern office the criticism has to be written and printed before the water in which the tea is to be made could possibly be boiled.

A man whom it was always amusing to meet was Ernest Wells, commonly known as "Swears," who died in London a few months ago. Wells was one of the founders of the famous Pelican Club in Gerrard Street, Soho, which was the London home of prize-fighting five-and-twenty years ago. The door-keeper at the Pelican was an extremely fat man, who was always known as "Fatty Coleman." One night Wells and two other men contrived, with a great deal of trouble, to wedge Coleman, who was very drunk, into a hansom cab and send him home. The cab drove off, but after he had gone a hundred yards the cabman turned and galloped back. "'Ere," he shouted, "it took three of you to get him in—how the blazes am I to get him out?"

After the Pelican had shut, Wells started a club in the City, which he called the "City Athenæum," but which, since its membership was practically confined to stockbrokers, was far better known as the "Thieves' Kitchen." The members used to play dominoes for very high stakes, and Wells used to complain that no sooner had he bought a new box of dominoes than he found the backs of the matadors ingeniously marked so that the intelligent and unscrupulous player could pick them out. One day Wells had all the dominoes collected and put into his office. The next morning he was told that Mr. Ikestein wanted a box of dominoes, whereupon he put his head out of his office and asked, "Marked or unmarked, old thing?"

"'I AM GLAD TO FIND,' SAID MR. SHAW ON THE FIRST NIGHT OF 'ARMS AND THE MAN,' 'THAT THERE IS ONE PERSON HERE WITH SUFFICIENT INTELLIGENCE TO SHARE MY OPINION OF THIS PLAY.'"

The story of "Fatty Coleman" and the hansom cab reminds me of another of Henry Hermann, the dramatist, told me, if I recollect rightly, by Mr. Henry Arthur Jones, who collaborated with Hermann in writing "The Silver King." Henry Hermann lived four or five miles from Charing Cross, and incidentally he had a glass eye. These are the two facts of the situation. He was very tired one night. He yearned to drive home in a cab, but had not money enough to pay the fare. He was, however, a man of resource. He called a hansom, told the man where to go, and then, just before he reached his destination, he opened the little trap-door in the cab's roof and urged the driver to hurry. The cabby slashed the horse with his whip and a yell of agony came from inside the cab. He pulled up to see what had happened, and Hermann jumped out, holding his handkerchief to his face and with his glass eye in the other hand. "You clumsy brute," he shouted, "you've cut my eye out with your whip!" The cabman looked at him with horror, then turned his horse round and galloped away (without waiting for his fare), lest worse things might befall him.

One's memory plays strange tricks and one remembers just as one forgets without any apparent reason. Just because it occurs to me, let me insert here a charming story I recently heard of the veteran comedian, Mr. Arthur Roberts. He was fulfilling a week's engagement at Folkestone in the winter. The weather was cold and bleak and the hotel where he was staying was almost empty. He arrived on Sunday afternoon and walked about trying to find someone to talk to. It was raining hard outside. The dining-room was empty. The lounge was empty. The smoke-room was empty. But Arthur Roberts went on searching. At last he caught sight of one of the hotel-porters sitting half asleep in the hall. He promptly went up to him and, holding out his hand, said, "Dr. Livingstone, I presume!"

One of the most dignified men who ever wandered by accident into Bohemia was the

late Colonel Newnham Davis, who gained a great reputation as an authority on eating and drinking, and who wrote for the *Sporting Times* over the pseudonym of "The Dwarf of Blood." Newnham Davis had a charming *chalet* at Le Touquet, where I spent many happy week-ends. Once while staying there I went to the little Casino de Forêt to play mild baccarat with a distinguished soldier who at that time was military attaché in Paris. In order to get into the baccarat room we had to give our names, addresses, ages, and all those other intimate particulars always demanded by French officialdom. When my soldier friend was asked his age he said that he did not know. "How is it, sir," asked the astonished official, "that you don't know your age?" "Because," was the reply, "I am a foundling." The official was perfectly satisfied and solemnly wrote the words "*enfant trouvé*" on the entrance card.

Thinking back to the many things that one has attempted to do in over twenty years of journalistic work, I recall with particular interest some inquiries I made of well-known novelists in the autumn of 1901 as to which, in their opinion, was their best book. Mr. Eden Phillpotts bluntly declared that "there is not one human being in the world who cares one damn which of my books I like the best." Mr. Thomas Hardy gave me the very interesting information that in his opinion his poems contained "more vital matter" than any other book' and I received a most interesting letter from Mr. H. G. Wells which, read again after all the fine work that Mr. Wells has done during the last eighteen years, seems to have even a greater interest than when it was written. He said :—

"My biggest thing, my most intimate thing, my first line of battleship, is 'Anticipations'; my best piece of significant story-writing, 'The Invisible Man.' I think 'The Wonderful Visit' manages to be pretty and that 'Love and Mr. Lewisham' is as near beauty as I am ever likely to get, and I am fond of 'The War of the Worlds' because of its destruction of property. I don't like the 'First Men in the Moon,' but I think it contains some of the best descriptive writing I have ever done. And I have a great tenderness for 'The Island of Doctor Moreau,' because it is the only book of mine that I think has been treated unfairly."

It has been my fortune to number many clergymen and, indeed, many ministers of all denominations among my acquaintance, and I have certainly not found them the least amusing men whom I have known. One of my great-grandfathers, Dr. Jabez Burns, was a well-known Baptist divine and, incidentally, one of the originators of the teetotal movement in England. He was an irascible old gentleman, and managed his congregation with a rod of iron. The stipends of dissenting ministers generally come from the pew-rents of their chapels. If the pew-rents are not paid, the minister's income suffers. But my great-grandfather did not stand any of that sort of nonsense. On the second Sunday morning after the end of each quarter he used to hold up a piece of paper in his hand just before his sermon, and say, "I have on this paper the names of all the brethren who have not paid their pew-rents. I shall read the names aloud next Sunday." But it was never necessary.

In my very early youth I was taken sometimes to listen to a minister whose aim was to make the best of both worlds. It was his regular habit to divide his discourses into two parts. The first part was addressed to the "saints" in his congregation, and the second to the "sinners." While delivering the first part he always looked at the people sitting in the expensive pews on the floor of the chapel; while, when he came to that part of his sermon intended for the sinners, he invariably turned to the cheap seats in the gallery.

Years ago I used frequently to see the Rev. Stewart Headlam, who is still doing splendid service in the cause of education, and who remains one of the most courtly and handsome of men. Mr. Headlam was the presiding genius of the Church and Stage Guild, and he used to give parties at his house in Bloomsbury at which the men were for the most part artists or writers of one sort and another, and most of the ladies

"ARTHUR ROBERTS PROMPTLY WENT UP TO HIM AND, HOLDING OUT HIS HAND, SAID, 'DR. LIVINGSTONE, I PRESUME!'"

belonged to the ballet. At one of these parties I was gossiping in a downstairs room with the late Lionel Johnson, the poet, when a tall, handsome young woman and a long-haired, decadent poet sat down together outside the door to rest after dancing. "Look at So-and-so," said Johnson. "He is talking to that unfortunate young woman about the weather; but when he gets back to the Temple he will write a poem about the conversation, and the poem will be perfectly lurid with vice."

Few men have ever been so utterly independent as Mr. Headlam has always been, and few men have ever stated their opinions with such courage. There is a story that he once attended a meeting held to discuss the proper keeping of the Sabbath during a certain Church Congress, and that he astounded the audience by bluntly declaring that "the one thing necessary to make England a truly Christian country was the Continental Sunday."

Mr. Headlam was one of the leaders of the Christian Socialists, with many of whom I was on terms of personal friendship. I remember

"I HAVE ON THIS PAPER THE NAMES OF ALL THE BRETHREN WHO HAVE NOT PAID THEIR PEW-RENTS. I SHALL READ THE NAMES ALOUD NEXT SUNDAY!"

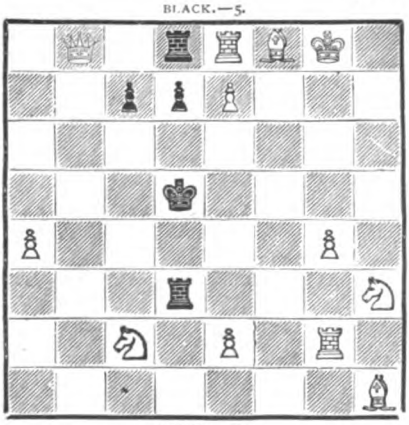
once a hard-up comrade calling on Dr. Percy Dearmer, who was then a curate in Paddington, and asking him if he could give him an overcoat. Dearmer turned out a perfectly good garment and gave it to his friend, who came back in about five minutes and asked for another. He said that he had met a man outside who wanted a coat even worse than he did, and that he had given him the first one.

I suppose that Bishop Creighton was less like a bishop in character and type of mind than any man who was ever selected to direct the destinies of a great diocese. There is a charming story told of Bishop Creighton receiving a deputation of clergymen at Fulham Palace. The good men were seriously disturbed in their minds about something or the other of the smallest real importance. The Bishop listened with growing impatience to one speaker after the other. When they had all finished, he said, "Brethren, I regret that I have never been numbered among those who suffer fools gladly," and then stalked out of the room.

CHESS CURIOSITIES.

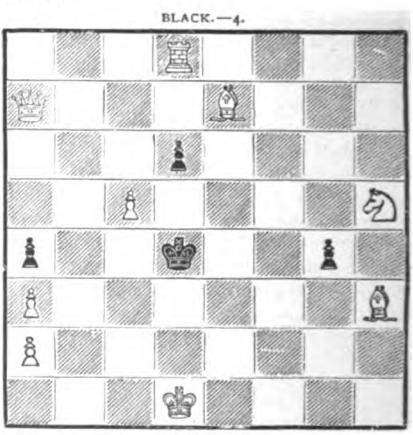
By T. B. ROWLAND.

BLACK.—5.



WHITE.—12.
White to play and mate in two moves.

BLACK.—4.



WHITE.—9.
White to play and mate in three moves.

These are two very curious problems, as each shows the greatest amount of liberty that can be given to the Black king. In the first his sable majesty has seven flight-squares. This is the greatest amount that can be given in a two-move problem or end-game. In the three-mover, however, the full possible amount—viz., eight squares—is given. It is believed that there is only one other problem of its kind in existence. This is probably owing to the great difficulty there is in composing such.

(*Solutions next month.*)

The work of the producer of a play is less known to the public than that of any other member of the theatrical profession. Mr. Leon M. Lion, the author of "Jack o' Jingles" and other plays, and part author of "The Chinese Puzzle," is well known as one of the best producers living, and the following interview will make clear to every reader how greatly the success of a play depends upon the skill of a man whom nobody ever hears of and who rarely shares any of the credit.

Producing a Play

An interview with Mr. LEON M. LION.

HE is the stage superman—the autocrat of his art. His knowledge is weird and wonderful. One moment he will criticize the work of the stage carpenter, the next he will act a part to demonstrate to the leading lady exactly how he would like certain lines delivered. Lights, scenes, dresses, colour effects, furniture, incidental music, the engaging of the cast, the soothing of the author, all fall within the ken of the producer.

He superintends the minutest detail. Every movement, action, word, and effect is considered by the producer before it is allowed to go into the play. In his mind he acts every character, so that he can coach each artiste in his or her particular part. There are many prominent actors to-day whose fame rests on parts which they have played automatically according to the producer's teaching. On the other hand, they are sometimes blamed by the critics for rendering certain parts in a wholly unsuitable manner, whereas it is the producer who is to blame for insisting on a rendering which the artiste realizes is not true to the character.

The whole of the play, as presented on the first night, is exactly as it is conceived in the mind of the producer, explained Mr. Leon M. Lion, to whom I am indebted for the information contained in this article.

"It is a jig-saw puzzle," he said, "into which he has put what brains he possesses, fitting and harmonizing the parts until they make a pretty, pleasing picture for the public. And on the first night you may find him prowling around the dark corners of the theatre, tearing his hair and biting his finger-nails, as he wonders whether any of the four or five thousand pounds spent on the production is coming back, or whether it has been thrown into the theatrical melting-pot with other failures."

At the time Mr. Lion's latest production, "Jack o' Jingles," was in rehearsal at the New Theatre. For hours I watched the producer at work, and came to the conclusion that for tact, patience, and energy, he must be awarded first prize.

"Don't you think, Mr. ——, that a little more swagger would add to the effect of the lines? Excellent," as Mr. —— proceeds to swagger, "but don't overdo it." "A beautiful design, Miss ——," this to the lady whose dresses are being discussed. "May I suggest, however, that the colour should be deeper, to tone more with the scene?"

A scene is being set, and the producer sits in the stalls to watch the effect. "Too crowded. Draw back that third wing. Pull up the top scene. The line is too low; the people in the gallery won't be able to see. Move that table to the right. Take one of those chairs away. Mr. ——, it would be more natural if you sat on the corner of the table. Tell the stage carpenter to alter that rustic seat, it is too light for the period of the play. It must be heavier. We must have some foliage to cover the sharp lines of that corner of the house. That door must open the other way."

Rapidly notes are made by those responsible for the alterations.

It is so easy to make a mistake. To have the heroine rushing on the stage, exclaiming:—

"Great heavens! If I only knew the time," while a large church clock is visible on the back cloth, is an example of what might happen if the lynx eye of the producer should fail him. Sometimes it is the author who is asked to alter

a few lines; sometimes it is the scenic artist who has to paint out something which clashes with the dialogue.

There was a curious slip in one well-known production. The scene was the exterior of a village church; and the worthy vicar, after evensong, came out and ostentatiously locked the church door with a very large key, one of a very large bunch. He paused a moment to look up at the starlit sky, when a fugitive from justice came out of the shadows, threw himself at the good man's feet, and asked for Sanctuary. The reverend father, after a short admonition, said, pointing to the church porch, "Go in, my son." "Wait a moment," the producer suddenly cried at one rehearsal. "You have locked the door and got the keys in your pocket. How is he going to get in?"

"ALTER THAT RUSTIC SEAT; IT IS TOO LIGHT FOR THE PERIOD OF THE PLAY."

On another occasion, in a sea scene, someone observed, after the vessel was supposed to be fifty miles from shore, that it would be as well if she weighed her anchor before starting!

And as the producer runs his critical eye over every detail of the scene, approving here, improving there, he tries to attend to callers. Photographers, who want pictures of the new play; pressmen who want copy; artistes who want engagements; costumiers, scenic artists, painters and decorators, electricians, and a dozen and one other people interrupt him from time to time. But the rush fails to ruffle his imperturbability. He refuses to be hustled, although his concentration is such that he forgets to smoke, and chews his cigar instead.

"To get through the work with the greatest economy of effort and friction is what I always aim at," Mr. Lion observed. "And in this respect I have learned many a valuable lesson from Charles Hawtrey, who, to my mind, is the super-producer. For this reason. He has a knack of getting the most out of every artiste and every member of his staff, by his calm, cool, soothing manner, no matter how irritating the circumstances may be.

"On the other hand, Sir Herbert Tree was apt to get a little excitable when rehearsals didn't please him. I remember on one occasion he was trying to suggest to a well-known actor that a certain scene should be played with more passion—'mountains of fire!' as he termed it. The actor tried two or three times, but still Sir Herbert wasn't satisfied, and at last he exclaimed:—

"'Great heavens! No! No! You are giving me blues. I want yellows! Yellows! With pink in your soul!' I am afraid Tree's power of seeing effects with a coloured vision was not shared by many of us.

"Tree, however, did not hesitate to sacrifice realism in order to get broad, striking effect. I remember an amusing illustration of this. In the days of my youth, when he was producing 'Julius Cæsar,' I went to him for an engagement. He looked me up and down for a moment and then said:—

"'But, my dear fellow, you are too small for a Roman citizen.'

"I was bitterly disappointed, and in desperation proceeded to argue. 'But,' I remarked, 'they had small Romans even in the days of Julius Cæsar.' Either because of my audacity in arguing the matter or because the point had not occurred to him before, Tree stared at me. Then, without speaking, he marched up and down the stage two or three times, finally halting abruptly in front of me.

"'You are right. Quite right. They did have small Romans. But we're not going to show them at His Majesty's.'"

"A DOZEN AND ONE PEOPLE INTERRUPT HIM FROM TIME TO TIME, BUT HE REFUSES TO BE HUSTLED."

The choosing of the cast is not the least of the producer's duties. When a play has been read and accepted, the producer is called in. He becomes the adviser-in-chief. He carefully reads the play, and plans the cast. He it is who decides which "stars" the leading parts are most fitted for. It may be that the author will be called upon to re-write a part to fit a certain artiste, but as a rule it is the actor

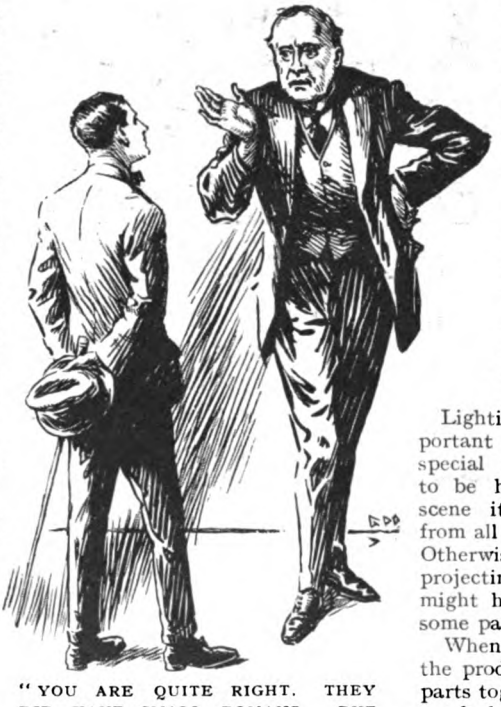
or actress who must adapt themselves to the part. For the minor parts a selection is made from the embryo Trees and Terrys, particulars of whom, together with photographs, records, and experience, the producer keeps beside him.

The co-operation of the author, of course, is desired, but the latter generally finds little cause for interference. As a rule he is content to leave everything to the producer, with an occasional suggestion. Mr. Lion, however, tells a story of the late Sir Augustus Harris, which shows that an author's feelings are sometimes outraged.

An Elizabethan drama was being rehearsed at the Lane, and Harris, in the opinion of the author, was taking liberties with the period as regards certain effects. The author writhed under the ordeal, and at last, unable to control himself, rose in his wrath, and shouted angrily :—

"Sir Augustus, Sir Augustus, will you please remember that this is a drama in the time of Queen Elizabeth?" Harris looked scornfully at him, and retorted: "Will you please recollect, sir, that this is Drury Lane under Gus Harris?"

The cast having been decided upon, the members are called together, the parts are read over to them, and they are sent away, maybe for a week, to learn their parts. Meanwhile the producer has models made of every scene as he intends to produce it. These models, made by the scenic artist, are costly little productions.



"YOU ARE QUITE RIGHT. THEY DID HAVE SMALL ROMANS. BUT WE'RE NOT GOING TO SHOW THEM AT HIS MAJESTY'S."

A distinct model for each scene is made up, each on a miniature stage board measuring about twenty inches by twelve, exactly to scale. The models are beautifully made, the material used being—for the greater part—cardboard. They are painted and all the entrances constructed, as in a real scene.

The producer can at once see from the model if it will permit of his play being performed as the stage directions of the author require, and a model may have to be rebuilt several times before the exact idea is carried out.

When it has been passed it is given over to the stage carpenter, who takes it to pieces, and by the scale marked upon it makes up the wooden frames upon which the canvas has to be stretched. Those when ready are sent to the scenic artist, who completes the work that he designed in his model.

Every little detail is faithfully depicted in the model. The trees are made with their trunks backed with wood so that they may stand, and the foliage is painted in on a piece of spreading cardboard with the edges cut to look natural. If the scene is the interior of a room, even the curtains and other hangings will be indicated in the model, paper taking the place of the lace, damask, or other material, so that on looking at the design it would be quite easy to imagine that one was viewing the stage through the wrong end of an opera-glass.

It is the duty of the stage manager to attend to the arrangements of working on the scenes after they have been painted, but he is directly responsible to the producer. The stage manager, however, relieves the producer of much worry, while it is not often that the scenic artists and costumiers are called upon to make many alterations after the models, colour schemes, and designs have been discussed and decided upon.

Lighting occupies such an important part in a play that special lighting rehearsals have to be held, while in setting a scene it has to be considered from all points of the auditorium. Otherwise there is a danger that projecting and hanging scenery might hide a portion of it from some part of the house.

When the rehearsals commence, the producer begins to group his parts together. The stage itself is marked for the positions which each artiste or group will occupy. No movement is made by a player unless there is a reason for it, and no article used unless it has some special use. To avoid overcrowding and to give room for plenty of action, while avoiding any starvation of the scene, is one of the problems over which the producer spends much thought.

Again, after the first few rehearsals he may come to the conclusion that the play drags. It requires speeding-up. He will ruthlessly cut if it is too long; perhaps merge one scene into another; introduce more humour here and more liveliness there, so that there is fresh interest and liveliness in the action.

Rehearsals are tedious and often necessarily prolonged. But, as Mr. Lion explained, the successful producer knows the value of nursing his artistes and his staff, and while criticizing when criticism is called for he prefers to appeal to their co-operation, for only by working wholeheartedly and enthusiastically together can the success of a play be ensured.

DO NOT MISS THIS STORY BY
THE GREAT NEW AMERICAN HUMORIST.

Omar the Strong Man

by FRANK CONDON

ILLUSTRATED BY A. GARRATT

OMAR GILL—whose acquaintance you have already made in "The Eclipse Handicap"—and I were comparatively new friends at the time, bound together by ties of poverty and a couple of roving dispositions, and we debarked one sultry afternoon in Joseph City from the extreme rear end of what the English jocularly call a goods train. We departed from our particular goods train about four impulsive leaps ahead of an irate brakesman armed with a coupling-pin and betraying brisk familiarity with its use.

Thereupon we discovered that we had landed in the midst of Joseph City, and after investigation we took a small bungalow in the outskirts. It was not difficult to take this modest home, because no one else seemed to be using it at the time. We moved in quietly through a rear window and prepared to enjoy what calm the future might hold. Those were indeed the happy days, when nerve was our main asset.

Omar immediately began to display unsuspected gifts with reference to groceries, fancy provisions, and all forms of edible human food. At dusk he would saunter forth into Joseph City, armed with nothing but a pleasant manner, and return later to our bungalow, very red and breathless, but with his arms full of canned corn, dried beef, Irish potatoes, and miscellaneous sundries, and for a time it appeared to me that we had been overlooking a singularly simple and refined way of sustaining life.

For a week everything was lovely, and then we met Eli Purman. I shall never forget Eli and neither will Omar. He was a red-faced man, with a rolling countenance, the chin of which formed the letter "m" as written out by schoolgirls struggling with the round-hand system, and he owned and operated the Joseph City Hotel.

In an unguarded moment Eli waxed friendly and invited us to walk into his sanitary bar and have at least one. From that moment the hotel was our club.

In those days it was Omar's totally unfounded but incurable conviction that he could sing tenor. Of an evening at the hotel, surrounded by a cheerful group, he often raised his voice in song, and the customers applauded and bought for both of us. There is no audience, of course, more warmly enthusiastic than a small group of adult males standing along the moist side of a bar and listening to a fellow biped in the act of song.

Sometimes I contributed to the evening's entertainment with a few anecdotes of the type that has caused moral thinkers to shudder for the future of America. Among our admirers, none was more outspoken than Eli Purman. He actually believed that Omar could sing, and that I was a raconteur with a great future. When we arrived one evening earlier than usual, Eli greeted us somewhat excitedly.

"There's a man looking for you, Omar," he announced. "He's coming in later."

"A man looking for me?" Omar repeated, and we glanced at each other sharply. I thought of the bungalow and the groceries, and of the last town wherein we had resided, and from which we had departed late at night and under full speed. Any man looking for us in those days usually wore a small metal ornament on his vest.

"He was in here a while ago," Eli continued, overlooking our alarm. "Nice-seeming man too. He's looking for a singer."

"What's his name?" I asked, still coldly suspicious.

"Professor Harmony Childs," replied Eli, and that was the first time in my life I ever heard of the genius who was to ally himself with us and guide our destinies for all these chequered years.

"He's got some kind of a show," our host explained. "You may make some money, so you'd better see him."

We lingered with Eli, and decided that anyone named Professor Harmony Childs, owner of a road show, would scarcely be hunting for us on legal matters, and in about fifteen minutes the door opened and Professor Childs came in.

Then, as now, he was a tall, handsome man, dressed quietly, self-possessed, and owner of a magnetic personality. He was, and is, one of the most persuasive talkers on the face of the earth, with a fine booming voice and a system of careless gestures. He was born a natural talker, with the gift of tongues, and he has always been able to take the words of our native language and festoon them around people in such a way that the victims finally begin to weep softly and hand him their loose change. Harmony is a wonder, without a doubt, and if he had lived in the days of Nero they would have fed him to the tigers for knowing too much.

On this fateful occasion he wore a light cane and a hat that glistened like a seal. He nodded genially to Eli Purman.

"Here you are, Mr. Childs," said Eli. "This is the Omar Gill I spoke about."

He pointed to Omar in a proprietary sort of way. Mr. Childs took his cigar from his mouth, glanced comprehensively at Omar, and bowed.

"This is George," Eli continued, nodding carelessly towards me.

We shook hands with the stranger, after which the show person began to explain himself. It appeared that he had arrived in Joseph City only that morning.

"Mr. Purman tells me you sing tenor," Harmony said to Omar.

"I am only a fair singer," Omar replied, with that bogus modesty observable in all tenor singers. "I wouldn't call myself a wonder."

He wasn't a wonder, as I have said, but he could sing for hours without the slightest fatigue, if relieved at intervals of the pangs of thirst. His principal characteristics were endurance and ignorance of how certain sounds affect the delicate mechanism of the human ear.

"Go on, sing for Mr. Childs," Eli urged, and Harmony smiled encouragingly. Omar backed himself over against the free lunch and took a long breath.

"Fine," said the professor, when the noises ended. "I'm going to hire you. That's all I need to hear."

"I knew you would the minute you heard him sing," Eli said, heartily. "Omar has the kind of a voice that mighty few people appreciate."

"I can tell that," Harmony remarked, looking again at Omar with that critical stare I have come to know so well in later years. "Are you as strong as you look, Mr. Gill?"

"Strong?" Omar murmured.

"I mean, have you a rugged constitution? You see, you're not a large man. Nobody would call you a large man, Mr. Gill."

"I know they wouldn't," Omar replied, "but I'm strong enough. I used to drive a truck in Fresno. Can a man pursue vinegar barrels up the back end of a dray without being strong? Anyhow, what's that got to do with it? I understood you were talking about hiring a tenor singer."

"He *looks* strong and wiry," Harmony continued, feeling Omar's shoulder-blades and speaking to Eli. "Still, you can't be certain."

"I tell you I *am* strong," Omar retorted, in some heat. "Do I have to sing while carrying a horse? What's singing for your show got to do with how strong I am?"

"Would you be willing to start for thirty dollars a week?" Harmony inquired, and at this point I kicked Omar swiftly to indicate that such was undoubtedly the case.

Omar nodded. "Of course," he said, "I shouldn't want to sing long for thirty dollars a week."

"You won't," said Harmony. Then he sat himself on a table and explained himself at length.

He stated that he was the sole owner of Professor Child's Mammoth Road Show, which consisted of refined vaudeville acts, with interpolations by Mr. Childs himself, usually of a light and amusing character. The show was coming from the East, and was to open for a week's performance at the Joseph City Opera House on the following Monday evening.

"And my regular tenor is temporarily ineligible," Harmony remarked, casually.

Later on I recalled that careless statement about his regular tenor being ineligible. That was just about as nice and polite a way of describing how that regular tenor was as I have ever heard.

The same night Harmony moved his trunks into the hotel and surrounded himself with the transient luxuries of Joseph City. At intervals Omar and I visited him in his rooms. He selected six songs for Omar, and they were all reliable veterans in the world of melody. He explained that they had always gone fairly well, down to and including "Home, Sweet Home" and "The Angel's Prayer."

"You'll only have to sing two or three each night," he told Omar. "Your act comes at the end of the show, and the audience will be getting ready to go home."

So Omar learned his six songs and sang them for Harmony until the new boss indicated that his tenor was now about ripe. Guests in the hotel complained to Eli Purman and said the same thing, adding that in their opinion Omar was overripe. And finally the Childs Road Show arrived in Joseph City in the day coach. We went down to the railroad to meet the troopers, and there we encountered Kearney's Trained Dogs, Hiller and Hiller, magicians of the air, and the Barcelona Bear Cat.

The artistes climbed down wearily from the last car of the Joseph City Cannon Ball, which was partly a freight train, and shook hands with their employer.

They were introduced to me and Omar, and I noticed that they regarded the little man

with what seemed to be a certain sad sympathy, coupled with the usual professional scorn.

"Ah!" said the Barcelona Bear Cat, mournfully smiling upon Omar. "Another tenor. I hope you are in good health, Mr. Gill."

Omar replied that his health was perfect, but I could see him wondering.

The Barcelona Bear Cat was a Spanish dancer and fandango expert, billed as Conchita Rosario. Actually she glanced up from her corned beef and cabbage when hailed as Gertie Quinn, which was her right name, just as Oil City was her right home, and not Barcelona. Hiller and Hiller were a couple of attenuated trapeze artistes with three children in a St. Louis convent. They were unusually large persons to be whizzing through the air, and when I knew them first, I was always afraid the trapeze would break. Later on I was afraid it wouldn't.

Kearney's trained dogs consisted of Kearney and four fox-terriers, and I discovered that nobody in that act were ever sober, except the dogs.

Towards the end of the week Omar signed up a truce with a local celebrity named Bert Coates, who played the Opera House piano when not engaged at his regular trade, which was coopering. Omar and Bert came to an understanding, and Mr. Coates learned that there was only one way to accompany Mr. Gill on a pianoforte. You gave Omar about half a street start and then followed him, making as little noise as possible.

The Road Show was strictly an entertainment without the usual fees. Harmony posted up red bills all over the town, announcing that the Great Childs Road Show would begin entertaining the public on the Monday following, and would continue for one week, there being no charge for any seat in the house. Everyone was invited cordially to witness the vaudeville show and listen to the humorous lectures of Professor Childs.

On that famous opening Monday night one of the largest crowds ever seen in Joseph City gathered before the Opera House and gave off sounds of pleasurable anticipation, until somebody opened the doors. The performance began with a piano solo at the hands of young Bert Coates, Bert being the entire orchestra. I occupied a rear seat, and remarked that Bert was an earnest, well-meaning piano player and in need of a haircut, which was his closest resemblance to Ignace Jan Paderewski.

Then Professor Childs walked out in front of the curtain and began to hypnotize those simple souls. It was a friendly little speech, in which he hoped that one and all would enjoy themselves, and he mentioned the lack of admission fees.

"You wonder what I have up my sleeve?" he asked, smiling genially down upon us. "You are puzzled by this free entertainment, and no wonder. I shall soon show you, because we are all grown-up, sensible people, and you know very well that I cannot afford to rent this fine theatre, pay for the various acts which you are about to behold, and thus lavishly entertain you for nothing. Whatever we get in this world we pay for in some way, and I assure you with great frankness that you are going to pay me for this excellent performance before the week is out. There will be no admission charge on any evening, up to and including the final performance on Saturday night. I thank you for this noble turnout, and would say on behalf of myself and company that we will do our best to please you. If you will now watch the curtain rise, you will observe Kearney's Trained Dogs, the most intelligent animal act ever offered the public."

Then Kearney came on with his dogs. Kearney needed a bath and some solid food, but it was a fair act, and when the curtain descended to the polite applause of a non-taxed audience, Professor Childs again strolled into view and picked up his remarks.

"This is supposed to be a mighty smart little town," he remarked, after he had warmed up a bit, and as he spoke he opened a box of cigars and placed it on a small table beside him. "In all such towns there is usually a certain reckless spirit of adventure if you can only stir it up. I propose to so stir it. I have here a box of a well-known brand of cigars that sell for five cents each. I suppose you could call this a fair five-cent cigar. Is there any man in the audience with enough sporting blood in him to pay me one dollar for one of these five-cent cigars?"

He lifted the vegetable product from the box and held it up. He turned it gently between his fingers, like a schoolmaster showing his class something. There was an astonished silence around me.

"At the hotel," Harmony continued, cheerfully, "someone told me that this was a live-wire town and

"'HERE YOU ARE, MR. CHILDS,' SAID ELI. 'THIS IS THE OMAR GILL I SPOKE ABOUT.'"

always ready to take a chance. We shall see. Is there any gentleman present willing to buy a cheap nickel cigar for the sum of one dollar ? "

Another silence followed, and then a hesitating voice was raised at the back of the house.

" Ah," said Harmony. " There is at least one sport in Joseph City. Will the gentleman walk down to the stage and show himself ? "

The gentleman would and did. He was a tall, rawboned individual, with an open countenance, partly concealed by all that week's whiskers. He was not the type that would be hired to run a large corporation in Wall Street, and as he moved down the aisle toward the stage the folks looked at him and giggled, while a few addressed him by name and gave him flippant advice.

" You are the gentleman who wishes to pay me one dollar for a five-cent cigar ? " Harmony asked.

The man nodded and grinned sheepishly. He held up his dollar bill. Harmony received it and handed him a smoke.

" Examine it carefully and don't lose it," the professor advised him. " You can't tell but what I may want that particular cigar again."

The buyer pocketed his cigar and returned to his seat.

Harmony resumed his lecture, and presently introduced the Barcelona Bear Cat in her passionate dances of the southland. Following her act, Harmony came on again, and then I saw that he was really the show, and the others were trimmings. Finally Omar's turn came, the singing act which wound up the regular performance, and the less said about Omar the better. I can sum it up in the remark of the lady who sat beside me. She said : " His people must have loved children a lot to bring him up."

Harmony Childs wound up the evening's festivities. He appeared just as Omar sidled off, and he demanded to know, before sending us all home, whether the man who had bought the cigar was still present. He was.

" Come down here in front," Harmony ordered, and the whiskered citizen stumbled down the aisle.

" Have you still got that cigar you bought for me ? " Harmony asked.

" Yes, sir," said the fellow.

" You bought it from me, didn't you ? It was a straight out-and-out sale, wasn't it ? "

" Sure," grinned the purchaser.

" All right," Harmony continued. " Now I'd like to buy it back from you. I'll pay you two dollars for it."

The man gulped audibly, handed the cigar to Harmony, and took the two dollars. Everyone present observed the transaction, and the wonder grew. Harmony then bade his audience good-night and urged them to come again and bring their friends.

" Remember—it's a free show, every night this week," he concluded, and Joseph City stumbled out into the darkness, trying to decide just exactly what kind of lunatic H. Childs might be.

" HE STATED THAT HE WAS THE SOLE OWNER OF PROFESSOR CHILD'S MAMMOTH ROAD SHOW."

On Tuesday evening the street in front of the Opera House looked like regular riot Tuesday in Berlin. The crowd was a street long and it broke down part of the Opera House before they could get the doors open. So far as the performance was concerned, it was identical with that of Monday night. Harmony appeared before and after each act, and this time he began by selling half-a-dozen five-cent cigars for two dollars each. Then he branched out. He plucked a hair from his raven locks and held it between his fingers. The audience watched him dumbly, and had he announced that he was about to hang himself with the said hair, there would have been no astonishment.

" This is a hair from my own head," he smiled. " I value this hair highly. Were I to sell it, I should ask five dollars, and I would tie a knot in it so that I should be able to recognize it again. I wonder—I really wonder if there is a sport in this audience who would risk paying me five large dollars for this knotted hair ? "

Was there such a sport ? There was a marching army of such sports. Twelve hurried gentlemen started for the stage, reaching into twelve pockets. Harmony sold his hair and the vaudeville show continued.

"This guy," said Omar to me, while he waited for his turn, "has escaped from some large, red building while the guards were eating. The only question is, is he crazy enough to forget our thirty dollars?"

Before the performance was over Harmony had sold that delighted gathering inconsiderable trifles of all sorts. He wrenched a small button from his shirt and disposed of it for six dollars. At the end of the show he repurchased it for twelve. He took a toothpick from his vest, marked it, and retailed it for four dollars. Then he resumed cigar selling, and his main trouble was not in making sales, but in keeping the mob within restraint.

About ten o'clock Omar stumbled on to the stage and sang his two tenor songs, but the crowd was impatient and had largely lost its love of music in any form. It told him harshly to stop singing and to get off that stage, which he did, looking very downtrodden and unhappy. Then Harmony surged forth and bought back everything he had sold. It must have cost him many fine dollars, but he did it with a pleased expression, as though nothing in the world could make him happier

Next day the word spread through Joseph City and throughout the entire county that a maniac of a most unusual and desirable character was holding forth at the Opera House. Persons needing ready money to pay on mortgages were urged to walk into the theatre and make whatever sums they required while the making was good.

That night the voters tore wearing apparel and bruised each other trying to crowd inside. For miles around they drove into town and hurried to the Opera House. And the prices received by Harmony for cigars and toothpicks were more ridiculous than ever. It was a steadily ascending scale, and presently I thought I began to discern the goal toward which this seeming imbecile was working.

As Harmony said, every town has its bunch of gay blades, who know about what's doing in New York. It was this group of mental leaders that decided that they could see through the game Professor Childs was playing and make a material profit by so seeing.

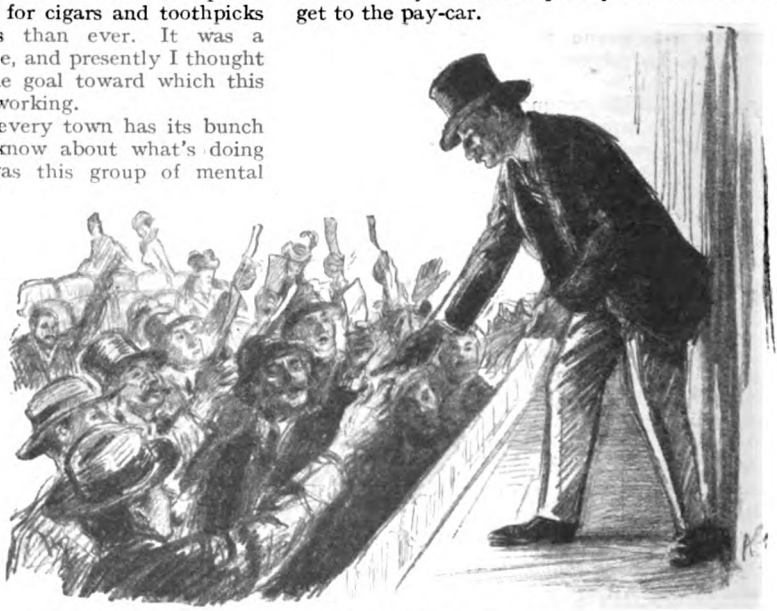
They concluded that Harmony would continue to sell assorted trifles until he reached the psychological moment, after which he would decline to purchase for the usual hundred per advance, or for any advance whatever. The question was, at what moment in the week's programme would this saturation point arrive? The smart Alexanders of Kitter's Pool Rooms decided that it might occur on Saturday night, which was the final performance, or even on Friday night. What they purposed was to outwit Harmony by investing heavily up to the last profitable moment and from then on to refuse to buy a single cigar, thus leaving the plain dupes of Joseph City to go on to their own destruction.

On Thursday night the professor was confronted by his very largest audience. They were hanging from the rafters by their toes, and every human being there present had money in his pocket which he intended to double before retiring for the night.

The air in the Opera House was electrically charged. Harmony was in fine fettle. When he started selling the El Cabbajo cigars, all he had to do was to open the box.

"Is there any liberal-minded citizen within sound of my voice willing to pay me fifteen dollars for a five-cent cigar?" he asked, and in the rush that followed strong men were mowed down and seats strained at their moorings. He disposed of cigars with both hands, and then retired smilingly to make way for the Barcelona Bear Cat.

After that he reappeared and sold a handful of toothpicks at prices which would have made the Lumber Trust moan in its sleep. Before the evening's programme was well under way, Harmony Childs had personal possession of most of the loose change in Joseph City and environs, and the audience was sitting back with bated breath, stirring nervously, and waiting anxiously for the performance to come to an end. All looked forward to Omar Gill, so that they could be quickly rid of him and get to the pay-car.



"THEN HE RESUMED CIGAR SELLING, AND HIS MAIN TROUBLE WAS NOT IN MAKING SALES, BUT IN KEEPING THE MOB WITHIN RESTRAINT."

I have never seen such a tense-looking, quiet-breathing crowd of mortals in one room as that audience of Joseph City investors. Some of them had unquestionably looted the children's bank to make this quick turnover. Middle-aged ladies moistened their lips nervously and reflected that if anything untoward happened they were ruined.

Presently Omar Gill, the untamed tenor, walked out to do his share in entertaining that vast throng. I recall now that Omar had definite orders each night. His instructions were to start singing and to keep on singing until the professor ordered him to cease and retire. He couldn't go wrong, and he hadn't, during previous evenings.

He had six songs in his repertoire, but so far he had never reached the third one. Likewise, his singing was always totally independent of approval or applause from the audience. He merely finished one song, looked at Bert Coates, and began another.

But on Thursday evening it was plain to see that Joseph City was thinking of other things than Omar's tenor voice. What those serious-faced people watched for and wanted was the final appearance of Harmony Childs, with his pockets full of money and the usual hundred per cent. profit. . . . And I figured if he *did* buy all that junk back, it would take enough money to dam up the Grand Canyon of the Colorado for two seasons.

"THE BAFFLED AND ENRAGED CITIZENRY TURNED AND GAZED AT OMAR GILL, WHO GAVE OFF A FEW LAST DYING NOTES AND BEGAN LOOKING FOR A DOOR."

From my quiet rear seat I looked at Omar, with his chin up in the air, and wondered for his future. After his third song the audience began very plainly to show signs of impatience, and at the beginning of the fourth song persons rose to their feet and told him that now was the time for him to quit making that noise and be gone. Someone in the gallery tossed a programme at Omar, and he could toss it, because it was wrapped round a beet.

However, Omar must have German blood. He believes in taking orders when you have orders to take, and plainly he had not received the customary signal from Harmony Childs. So he sang on and on. And the longer he sang the nearer he moved in a direct line toward the next world.

In his fifth song Omar was sweating and the audience was rising to its feet with the vague notion that the time had now arrived when something must be done. I began to sense that uncanny quiet that just precedes a typhoon where lives are lost, and while I was convinced that all was not well on the stage I felt sure it would be worse in a minute.

With Omar clawing at some extra high notes, the audience seemed to perceive the dastardly plot all in an instant. Those who were not on their feet gritted their teeth and rose up, feeling that if murder must be done, it must be done thoroughly. Citizens shouted for Harmony Childs to step forth like a man and show himself. He failed to do so. Omar was still singing, but there was no noise except that made by Joseph City.

I saw the coming storm. The pool-room slickers led the rush, because it was the last night they had intended to invest, and in two minutes the audience had left its usual habitat and had climbed on the stage, where it wandered about uneasily hunting for Mr. Childs and his troop. It was learned in no time at all that the Childs Road Show, including the Barcelona Bear Cat, Kearney and dogs, Hiller and Hiller, and the professor himself, had gone somewhere else, and that the tenor singer was practically all that was left.

The scene that follows not only beggars description, but murders it and buries the body. The baffled and enraged citizenry turned and gazed at Omar Gill, who gave off a few last dying notes and began looking for a door. I ran down the aisle intending to come to Omar's aid, if he needed it, and I just reached the stage when some large, powerful voter picked up a chair and tried to hammer my head down through the rest of me. Two dozen persons attempted to annihilate Omar at the same instant, and his life was only saved because so many can't work on such a small man at the same time. I shouldered my way toward him, and a large,

black object seemed to fall on me. That is all I remember.

There is a nice hospital in Templeton, the next town down the railroad from Joseph City, and because there are no accommodations for wounded in Joseph City we were removed. When I opened my eyes a sweet-faced nurse was feeding Omar with some warm milk through a tube. I have never seen a sadder spectacle than Omar Gill was on that sunny morning, with the sun streaming in on his bandages.

He had returned to consciousness ahead of me, and the very first thing he said referred to financial matters.

"George," he said, wanly, "there's thirty dollars we never *shall* lay eyes on. Never in this world. You were right, George. I ought to have got that in advance."

"Hu!" I laughed, harshly, "and we said Harmony Childs was crazy. At least, you did. The trouble with you and me, we're too sane altogether."

"And," said Omar, moaning softly, "now I know why he was so darned particular about me being a strong man with no heart disease and such. Now I *do* know."

"Sure," I said. "He said his last singer was ineligible. He's lucky he ain't interred too."

Naturally the whole thing was easy to see from a couple of soft pillows in the hospital. It appears that Harmony and his road show had quietly sneaked out of Joseph City during the most interesting part of the performance. They embarked on the ten-forty train going north, with Omar singing them to safety, like old Horatio at the bridge.

We were in the Templeton hospital for going on two weeks, recovering slowly from wounds, abrasions, and sprains. Omar had two ribs that healed rather slowly, and toward the end of the second week I was smoking a cigarette in the window and Omar was looking through the county recorder's last annual statement, when the door opened and a smiling gentleman entered. It was Harmony Childs.

"Well, well," he said, in the booming voice that always distinguished him. "They laid you out, did they? I rather thought they would."

Omar laid down his book. "Kill him, George," he said. "Go on, kill him. You're up, and I'm not any too well."

"Hearken to me," Harmony said, still smiling and holding out his hand. "I'm your friend."

"George," said Omar, in the same low tone, "are we going to let this man get away alive?"

"I like you two," Harmony persisted. "I've taken a real fancy to you; that's why I came back here, where, I might add, I linger at some personal risk."

"George," said Omar, "you'll find a gun in the bureau."

"My company," continued Harmony, "is now disbanded, and of no further use. It likewise is in a Nevada jail and will remain until next term. I escaped and came straight to find out how you were getting on. The road-show business is played out, and I am about to quit it and take up other lines. As I say, I took a fancy to you two the minute I saw you, and I need a couple of partly intelligent helpers. If you had any brains, you might get somewhere, and I am prepared to supply the brains and take you in as partners. We shall form a combination in which I shall do all the thinking. If you care to join me, we will all make money; and as an evidence of my good faith I shall now hand you a couple of hundred each. Are you on or not?"

I looked at the roll of bills and then glanced at Omar.

"See if it's real money," he suggested; and I did.

Harmony stood there smiling and waggling his currency.

"Do we go in with him?" I inquired, of the invalid.

"Sure," Omar replied. "Only I'm through with singing. If we start a partnership, it is hereby understood that I don't sing."

"You never did sing," said Harmony, and then I relieved him of the cash before he changed his mind.

HIDDEN FURNITURE.

THE following contains the names of nineteen articles of furniture. Can you find them?

"Which air do you feel most able to enjoy?" he asked. "The air," she replied, "which rushes from ever so far away, as we drive along in the car, petrol supplying the life. No matter—it is too late now to set teeming drops of oil to work for our pleasure." "What? Not at all!" he exclaimed. "Walk by my side, board the car, and let us be off. End erring fancies in delight." So they sat, the man dour, ugly even; the woman, young, chic, locking her fingers in his, as the car throbbed steadily along. The moorland on all sides kept its glory of heather secret, aired by day, hidden by night. They were headed for Manchester. Fields took the place of moors. They stopped, and he took off his hat, standing admiring the stars. She too looked up. "I, another night, will star-gaze too," she said, "but now let us return." He turned as though ending a rite at a blessed altar, and they drove swiftly home.

(*Solution will appear next month.*)

"The Best Rubber I Ever Saw Played."

By R. F. FOSTER, *Author of "Advanced Auction Bridge."*

Mr. Foster's article has been submitted to other Bridge experts, who have supplied specimens of what they consider to be the best games of Auction Bridge within their knowledge.

THE most remarkable play I have ever seen or heard of was brought off in the following hand, and the beauty of it was that the play was made without a moment's hesitation, as if there were nothing else to be done :—

Hearts—None.
Clubs—King, 5, 3.
Diamonds—10, 9, 8, 6.
Spades—Ace, king, queen, 10, 5, 4.

Hearts—Queen, 9, 8. Clubs—2. Diamonds—Ace, king, queen, knave, 3, 2. Spades—6, 3, 2.	Y A B Z	Hearts—7, 6, 2. Clubs—Ace, queen, 10, 9, 8, 7. Diamonds—None. Spades—Knave, 9, 8, 7.

Hearts—Ace, king, knave, 10, 5, 4, 3.
Clubs—Knave, 6, 4.
Diamonds—7, 5, 4.
Spades—None.

Z dealt and bid two hearts, A three diamonds, and Y three spades. B went to four clubs, and Z to four hearts, in spite of his partner's denying that suit. A doubled. Had Z been left to play the hand at hearts, he would have been down for 300, but Y took him out of the double with four spades, which B doubled.

It will readily be seen that if the average player had held Y's cards, he would have been down for 500 points on the play, as B, who has no diamonds, would lead ace of clubs. As all good players use the down-and-out echo against a trump declaration, B would know by the fall of the two small cards from A and Y that A had the king or no more.

The second club A would trump, and would run off four winning diamonds. Whether B trumps the diamond to give A another ruff on clubs or passes it does not matter, as they must make two trump tricks, or the fourth diamond and a trump. This downs the contract for five tricks ; but instead of that Y won the game, making four odd, or five tricks more than this play shows.

The moment B laid down the ace of clubs, Y realized that he could not have a diamond, or he would never lead away from an ace-queen suit. Y also saw that B, who was a very good player, would immediately read his partner for the king of clubs or no more, and in order to lead B to believe that A held all three of the small clubs, 5, 3, and 2, Y promptly dropped his king on the ace.

The situation now appears to B to be that if he leads the queen of clubs he not only gives Y a ruff, but establishes that best club against himself in the dummy. The best chance seems to be to lead through the denied suit, hearts. B therefore led the small heart, as if he had an honour, hoping to tempt dummy to finesse.

Dummy put up the king, led the ace, and trumped the third round. Then Y led three winning trumps, exhausting A, and marking that player with six diamonds, no clubs, and no hearts ; therefore he cannot hold the jack of trumps, which must be with B. By leading the losing trump he forced B to lead the clubs, and the jack of clubs wins the game.

Instead of losing 500 points, Y wins 122. This shows a difference of 622 points, all of which hinges on the play of one card.

By ERNEST BERGHOLT, *the well-known Bridge expert of "The Field."*

THE following was played with the greatest ingenuity by my lamented friend, the late W. H. Whitfeld :—

Hearts—9, 8.
Clubs—A, K, 10, 6, 2.
Diamonds—Q, 5, 4.
Spades—J, 8, 3.

Hearts—Q, 4, 2. Clubs—Q, 9, 5, 4. Diamonds—A, 9, 8, 3. Spades—Q, 7.	Z (Dummy) B A Y	Hearts—K, J, 10, 7, 6, 3. Clubs—7. Diamonds—K, J, 10, 6. Spades—10, 5.

Hearts—A, 5.
Clubs—J, 8, 3.
Diamonds—7, 2.
Spades—A, K, 9, 6, 4, 2.
SCORE : Love all.—Z dealt.

THE DECLARATIONS : Z, one club. A, one heart. Y, one spade. B, two hearts. Z, No. A, No. Y, two spades. B, No. Z, No. A, three hearts. Y, three spades. All pass.

B led the queen of hearts, Z and A followed, and Y (the declarer) won with the ace.

Now, I happen to be in a particularly good position for knowing how this hand would have been played in an ordinary way, because, when I first published Whitfeld's play, I received from a very high authority on the game the following critical remarks :—

"What strikes me particularly [about this hand] is that . . . no ordinary bridge-player, playing at the card-table, and knowing nothing about the placing of the unseen cards, would rise to the height of the deductions which you set out ; the play is very pretty, but it is beyond the limits of even a first-class player. . . . If I were playing the hand, I should—after clearing

the trumps with ace and king (playing the 3 and 8 from dummy)—take out three rounds of clubs, trump the fourth round, put dummy in again with the knave of trumps, and so win eleven tricks and the game. . . . That would be the ordinary way."

But Whitfeld, without risking anything, played for and won the small slam. At Trick 3, when B's queen of trumps fell to his king, he saw that the 10 would necessarily fall from A's hand. He therefore got rid of dummy's knave, in order that, *if necessary*, he might be able to take over the 8 with the 9 in his own hand. It is to be observed that this is no bar to following out my critic's line of play, because Y can still lead, if he wishes, the 6 of trumps from his own hand, for dummy to win with the 8. In point of fact, he left himself with a "double option."

At Trick 4, Y led the knave of clubs, covered by B with the queen, and won by dummy with the king; A followed suit.

At Trick 5, dummy led the ace of clubs, and *A renounced*. The declarer at once saw that B would remain with the 9 and 5. He therefore *threw the eight* from his own hand, so that the run of the suit might not be interrupted when clubs were led again through B up to dummy's 10, 6.

Now, the full value becomes evident of the "option" in trumps which the declarer had retained. At Trick 6, dummy led the 8 of trumps won by Y's 9. He then (Tricks 7, 8, 9) continued the clubs, and was able to throw away two losing cards on them before A B got in. Result: Y Z won small slam.

Of course the difference in points made by Y's clever play was not so sensational as in Foster's hand; but the judgment and foresight displayed were highly remarkable.

By "YARBOROUGH," *the conductor of the Bridge column in "The Sunday Times."*

EVEN after a consultation of records extending over a long series of years, I find it very difficult to fix upon any hand as being the "best" that I have seen. The following, however, which I saw played by Ernest Bergholt—and which, I understand, he subsequently published—has always struck me as involving some specially subtle and instructive points:—

	Hearts—A, J, 8, 4, 2. Clubs—10, 9, 8, 7. Diamonds—4. Spades—K, 10, 4.	
Hearts—7. Clubs—K. Diamonds—Q, J, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6. Spades—Q, 8, 5, 2.	B (Dummy) Y Z A	Hearts—K, Q, 10, 9, 6, 5. Clubs—J, 5, 2. Diamonds—K, 2. Spades—7, 6.
	Hearts—3. Clubs—A, Q, 6, 4, 3. Diamonds—A, 5, 3. Spades—A, J, 9, 3.	

SCORE: A B, love; Y Z, 20.

Z dealt and bid one heart, A two clubs, and Y two diamonds. B assisted with three clubs. Z three hearts, which A and Y passed, but B doubled. Z passed. It now appeared to A that three no-trumps ought to be a certainty for game. B had raised in clubs and had doubled hearts, while A himself had command of diamonds. To play for game seemed decidedly better (particularly at a backward score) than trying for penalties, so A bid the three no-trumps, which everyone passed.

It is quite a disputable point whether Y should have started with his own diamonds, or led to his partner's hearts; but, as a matter of fact—hoping to find Z with at least the king—he led the queen of diamonds. Dummy's hand went down; Z played the king; and A passed the trick. At Trick 2, Z returned the diamond, and A (not being certain whether Z held a third diamond or not) again held up his ace. Y won, and led a third round, forcing out the ace, while Z threw the 5 of hearts.

Note right here that the declarer had to make two discards on the diamonds, and that these discards called for good judgment. It was important to get rid of *one* of the clubs, for fear of blocking the suit. On the other hand, the declarer did not yet know enough about the clubs to be able to decide whether he would want a *third* club in dummy (so as to be able to lead through Z) or not. At Trick 2, therefore, he threw the deuce of hearts, and, at Trick 3, the 7 of clubs.

The business of the declarer now was not to give Y any preventable opportunity of getting in to make his long diamonds, and he proceeded to provide for the contingency of Y's holding four spades to the queen. At Trick 4, he led 9 of spades, Y played the deuce, and B the 4. At Trick 5, A went on with the 3, Y played the 5, and B won with the 10. At Trick 6, B led king of spades, Z discarded 6 of hearts, A played the jack, and Y the 8.

The declarer could now count Y with the lone queen of spades and four diamonds. He had, therefore, only two cards between the hearts and the clubs. At Trick 7, he led dummy's 10 of clubs, on which Z played the deuce. A figured that if Y held the king of clubs it was most likely lone, and that it would never do to venture any *finesse*, so he *put up the ace*, and the king dropped!

Observe, now, that the declarer can place every remaining card of the hand. Z is known to hold jack and 5 of clubs, and the play becomes a peculiarly pretty proposition. Dummy must be put in (Trick 8) with the ace of hearts, and B must then lead another club through Z's knave. If (i.) Z should decline to cover, A will play a small club, leaving the suit established, and dummy *with a club to lead*. But if (ii.) Z covers with the knave, A will win with the Queen, and next (Trick 10) lead out his ace of spades, on which dummy will *discard his last (blocking) club*.

In the actual game, it was case (ii.) that materialized; but, anyway, Z was helpless. A B won eleven tricks—game, with two tricks to spare.

Johnny Buys a "Pup."

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

By H. B. CRESWELL.

Illustrated by G. E. Studdy.

NOW this is a story of when Johnny Peascod went far away to school, and Marytary is not in it at all, and that makes me feel sorry, but I can't help it, for Marytary did not go away to school with Johnny. The story is only a short story, so it won't take long to tell, but it is exciting.

At the school Johnny went to, some of the boys had animals for their very own that belonged to no one else. One boy had guinea-pigs; and another boy had two very nice white rabbits with black marks on them; and another boy had a very pretty pink rat that was quite tame, and it would run up the sleeve of his coat, and stay quiet in his pocket in school and eat up the crumbs in it, but, of course, the master did not know the rat was there all the time. Really and truly, this rat was a white rat. It had pink eyes, of course, because all white rats have pink eyes, like white rabbits. Joseph—that was the name of the boy the rat belonged to—thought how nice it would be if his rat was quite pink all over, so he painted it with red ink because that will not come off, and he did it very gently with a soft brush, so that I do not think the rat minded. And the rat used to sleep under Joseph's pillow, and it would run down under the blankets and sheets and eat all the crumbs which get quite hard in the bed and hurt you, and leave little dents in you when you get up in the morning. Sometimes Joseph would let Johnny have the rat in *his* bed, and you would not believe how he tickled your toes and made you laugh.

But what Johnny really wanted most of all was a little dog for his very own; so he saved up all his money when he was at school till he had a shilling and a sixpence and seventeen pennies and four halfpennies, and when he came home his father put three shillings to it; and he had a sixpence and five pennies in his money-box that he had just begun to save up for a cricket ball, and that made altogether seven shillings exactly, and you can add it up for yourself if you like, but it is rather difficult.

So the next day after he got home for his holidays Johnny went to Marytary's house, and said :—

"I've got a secret."

So Marytary said, "What is it?"

And Johnny said, "I'm going to buy a real little dog with my very own money."

You can imagine how excited Marytary was, and how quickly she ran to her mother to ask if she might go with Johnny and help him buy his dog.

Marytary's mother said, "Yes, dear, very well; but don't let him bring it in here. I won't have dogs in the house making the floor all muddy and tearing the hearth-rug," and that is the thing grown-up people always think of. Marytary ran and put on her hat and started off with Johnny, but, would you believe it! after they had gone a little way Rose came running after them and told Marytary her mother wanted her. When Marytary went back, her mother said :—

"Have you got on your thick boots? And is the button on your glove?"

Now Marytary *did* have on her thick boots and the button *was* on her glove, so it was all right.

When they came to Mr. Bean's shop at Rudbery, there were rabbits and guinea-pigs and mice and rats in the window; and some of the mice ran round and round after their tails, and one of the rats was in a cage like a wheel, and he ran round and round so that a lot of people stood and watched him; and a squirrel did the same; and there were parrots, too, and lots of birds and other creatures, but there was only one dog, and he was quite a little dog, for a lady, with a ribbon round his neck, and not a boy's dog at all. So Marytary said :—

"Why don't you get some nice rabbits or a squirrel, Johnny?"

But Johnny said: "No, I want a dog." But there were not any dogs.

Just then Mr. Bean, who was standing at the door with his coat off (but I don't think he had any coat to wear at all really, because his own private dog that he never sold was always sleeping on it), saw Johnny and Marytary, and he said, very politely :—

"What can I do for you to-day, sir?"

So Johnny said: "I want a dog for my very own, and you have only got a lady's dog."

Mr. Bean laughed. "Just step this way, please," he said. So they went right into the shop, and out by another door and into a yard, and you simply would not believe what a lot of dogs there were. And directly the dogs saw Johnny and Marytary they all cocked up their ears and wagged their tails, and some of them barked, and I think it was because they wanted

Johnny to buy them. They were all in cages, and dogs don't like being in cages, and that was why they wanted Johnny to buy them; and if I was a dog I would choose to be Johnny Peascod's dog, I think.

There was a very nice big dog with long hair, and Johnny asked, "How much is that one?" and Mr. Bean said, "Four quid," because it was a "collie dog," and it is a lot of money, so Johnny said, "I think he is too big." and he was quite right, for a big dog knocks you down when he is excited.

Then there was a dear little dog with black ears and a bristly coat, and it was an Aberdeen terrier, and Johnny asked "How much?" and Mr. Bean said, "You can have him for thirty bob," and that is a lot of money, too, and Johnny said his legs were too short, and I think he was quite right, because he could not run after wild rabbits fast enough with such short legs.

Then there was a very nice white dog, with a black patch on one eye, and he was called Bruiser, and it means someone who hits you in the eye and makes it all black; and Johnny liked Bruiser very much, and Bruiser tried to lick Johnny's hand through the wire of his cage because he liked Johnny, but Mr. Bean said he was twenty-five shillings, so Johnny could not buy him because he had not got enough money. So he told Mr. Bean, "I have only got seven shillings."

"Then what you ought to do is to buy a nice puppy," said Mr. Bean.

"But I don't want a puppy," said Johnny. "I want a real grown-up dog for my very own, and he is not to belong to anybody but me."

"Well!" said Mr. Bean. "If you got a puppy, he would soon grow into a dog, and you could teach him what you liked, and he would never want to belong to anyone else; but these grown-up dogs all belong to someone else, and they might run away and go back to their old masters."

So Marytary said: "Yes, *do* buy a puppy, Johnny, because they are so pretty."

So Johnny said: "All right, Mr. Bean. I will have a puppy."

Now there were several puppies, but the nicest puppy was a yellow puppy with short hair and great strong legs, and quite fat and strong. Mr. Bean said it was about four weeks old, and he did not know what sort of a dog he was going to grow into, because he had been found right out in the country, and Mr. Bean had only had him a few days. Johnny was afraid it would be too much money, and Mr. Bean said "Twelve shillings," so poor Johnny was very disappointed, because twelve shillings is more than seven shillings, and he only had seven shillings, and he looked as if he was going to cry, so Marytary said:—

"I will give you some of the money out of my money-box that I have saved up, Johnny, and so you can buy the puppy; and when you have saved up some more money yourself you can put it back into my money-box"; and Mr. Bean said: "I will give you a collar and a lead for nothing." So that made little Johnny very glad again, and they took the puppy, because Mr. Bean said that Marytary could bring the rest of the money another day, and the puppy could walk a little, but he soon got

"THE NICEST PUPPY WAS A YELLOW PUPPY WITH SHORT HAIR AND GREAT STRONG LEGS. MR. BEAN SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT SORT OF A DOG HE WAS GOING TO GROW INTO."

tired, so Johnny carried him and Marytary carried him too, and he was so soft and heavy and strong you wouldn't believe, and Johnny called him "Sandy," because he was exactly the same colour as yellow sand.

Now the rest of the story is very exciting, and it begins when Johnny went back to school again, because he took Sandy with him in the railway carriage in a basket, and when he got to school, John, the school porter, gave him a kennel in the yard where all the dogs were kept, and I don't think Sandy liked it at first because he had been used to sleeping in Johnny's bedroom, but they won't let dogs do that at school.

Every morning before breakfast Johnny used to go and see Sandy, and play with him with a ball tied on to a bit of string, and when he took him out in the afternoon Sandy used to try and catch birds, and sometimes rabbits, but he never caught them because he was only a puppy, and I am very glad; but he used *nearly* to catch them by creeping up slowly, and then rushing at them with great jumps, so that Johnny laughed and laughed, and none of the other boys' dogs were as clever as Sandy was in trying to catch things. But although Sandy was only a heavy, clumsy-looking puppy, he was growing very fast all the time, and he got to be so strong that Johnny could hardly hold him; and when he played with the grown-up dogs belonging to the other boys he rolled them over, and they did not like it, and they would not play with him; and some of them were afraid of Sandy because they put their tails between their legs, and so I *know* they were afraid.

Now one day a big boy came running up to Johnny with a great hairy tassel in his hand, and he was very red, and he said, "Look what your dog has done," and the tassel was the tail of his own pet dog that Sandy had bitten right off because the other boy's dog had bitten Sandy. He was a bigger dog than Sandy, and quite grown-up, so I think Sandy was quite right.

At last, one day when Johnny went down to say good morning to Sandy before breakfast, Sandy did not come out of his kennel, so Johnny looked in, and there was poor Sandy lying on his side, and his body was swollen up and he was panting, and his eyes were blinking slowly, and Johnny knew Sandy was very, very ill, and that perhaps he was going to die, so he ran and fetched John. When John came he looked into the kennel, and then he put his hand in to feel Sandy's side where it was all so swelled up, but Sandy growled, so he pulled his hand back, because Sandy had a great big head and very large teeth, although he was only a puppy.

Then John said:—

"He looks as if he was poisoned. He's been and eaten something he oughtn't. He's the queerest pup I ever did see. He don't seem to care for his food like the other dawgs, but the more he gets the hungrier he is."

"Is he going to die, John?" asked poor Johnny.

"Well, sir," said John, "if he does not get better to-day I'll send for the Vet. It's a pity to see a strong young pup all laid out like that."

Now a Vet. is a doctor for dogs and cats and horses when they are ill, because he knows what medicine they ought to have, and an ordinary doctor does not know.

Just then Blobs came out to see his dog. Blobs was not his real name, but he was called Blobs because he never made any runs at cricket, and it was a nickname, and boys always call each other by nicknames. And Blobs said:—

"Why, where is Tiny?"

Now Tiny was a little dog that he kept in the kennel next to Sandy, but he was not there.

And John said: "He'll be back for his dinner, sir, you needn't fret; you can see he has pulled his head out of his collar," because there was Tiny's collar and his chain fastened to the kennel, and John said it showed that Blobs had not fastened his collar tight enough, so that Tiny had pulled his head out, and a dog will always do that if he can, and it is very clever of them, I think.

When Johnny went to see Sandy again he was better, and he was sitting outside his kennel, but he would not touch his dinner, which was puppy biscuits, very nice, all chopped up with delicious bits of meat and greens; and when Johnny undid his chain he would not move, but only blinked his eyes; and when Johnny pulled him he would not come, and he growled at Johnny, so Johnny smacked him on his head (but not hard, because he was ill), and chained him up again and left him. The next day Sandy was much better, but he would not eat anything, and he was sulky; and it was two days before he would go out with Johnny, and then he looked so like a barrel on legs that all the boys laughed, and it made Johnny ashamed because Sandy looked so funny. But Blobs did not laugh. He was very unhappy indeed, for his little dog Tiny never came back, and John said someone had stolen him. When Blobs went out with the other boys, he kept looking over the hedge and calling "Tiny, Tiny, Tiny," so the other boys all shouted "Tiny, Tiny," and that made Blobs run after them and try to catch them to hit them, but he could not catch them, except one boy, and he hurt this boy, and so this boy, who had a very ugly dog, taught it so that if you said "Tiny," he barked and got very angry, and pretended to try and bite you.

Now these are all the things boys do at school, but I do not think it is very kind of them, because Blobs was very fond of his little dog Tiny, and was nearly as sorry to lose him as you could be if you had a little dog and he ran away and never came back. But he got another dog, and he called him Bruin, and I think he liked him better than Tiny in the end, but that was more than a month afterwards.

Now the day after all this Sandy seemed nearly quite well, but he would not eat his dinner, and John said:—

"I don't know what's come over the dawg, he's getting sulky, and there is no pleasing him."

"SANDY LOOKED SO LIKE A BARREL ON LEGS THAT ALL THE BOYS LAUGHED, AND IT MADE JOHNNY ASHAMED BECAUSE SANDY LOOKED SO FUNNY."

So Johnny lifted Sandy up by the baggy skin that all dogs have at the back of their neck and held him, and pushed the dish with his dinner right up against his nose, and Sandy growled, and then hit Johnny's hand with his paw so that the dish was broken, and he went into his kennel growling, with his ears pressed down on the top of his head, and his long tail wagging slowly. Johnny did not slap him, because Sandy was so strong he could not have pulled him out of his kennel, and his hand was bruised where Sandy's paw had struck him.

The next morning Johnny went out early to see how Sandy was, and when he got to the kennel he saw "Bull" talking to John, and he was called Bull because when he was playing football he ran straight, with his head down like a bull. And John said to Bull :—

"Well, sir, you should take more care of your dog"; so Johnny went up and said :—

"Why, what's the row?"

And John said :—

"Ginger slipped his collar last night, and has run away."

And there was Ginger's collar and chain fastened to the kennel, but Ginger was not there.

"I shall tell the Police," said Bull. "I don't want him stolen as Tiny was; there are a lot of gipsies about. Your dog's gone too, 'Pod.'"

Now Johnny was always called Pod at school because Pod is another word for a Peascod, and means the shell in which peas grow when you pick them. Johnny was frightened when Bull said that Sandy had run away, but he hadn't run away at all, really, because there he was in the back of his kennel with his eyes shining in the dark all the time. But, oh, dear! poor Sandy was very ill indeed. He was all swelled up again, only worse; and his legs were sticking straight out, and he groaned every time he drew his breath, and his eyes were staring, and he took no notice of Johnny.

"Yes," said John. "He's got it bad whatever it is. I'll tell the Vet. to come and see him. No puppy ought to go on like that, and he hasn't eaten anything for nearly a week."

It so happened that it was just after school was over that the Vet. came, and Johnny went out, and the Vet. was looking into the kennel with John, and Johnny said :—

"It's my dog; he's a puppy, and he is called Sandy."

"I can't see him," said the Vet. "Can you make him come out?"

But Sandy would not come out, he only growled.

"I'll soon get him out," said John; so he lifted the back of the kennel and tilted it up so that Sandy came sliding out with all the straw, and that made him very angry indeed.

Directly the Vet. saw Sandy, he cried out: "Oh, my uncle! Save us!" and his hat came off and he fell on his back, and then rolled quickly across the yard, like a barrel, out of Sandy's reach.

This made Johnny roar with laughter, and even John smiled, and John was a very serious man indeed, because he had eleven children.

"Take care he doesn't get loose!" cried the Vet. as he clambered to his feet, all covered with dust; but poor old Sandy was too ill to do anything but growl.

"What's the matter, sir?" said John. "There ain't no harm in him."

"No harm in him," cried the Vet. "Why, can't you see *he's a lion!*"

Did you ever hear of such a thing? But the Vet was quite right, and Sandy was a real lion cub all the time, and that is what made him so

strong; and that is why he used to creep up to birds and rabbits and try and catch them, and press down his ears and wag his tail when he was angry. And why do you think he was so ill the first time? It was because he had eaten poor Tiny, and that was why he did not want anything to eat for a week after. And why do you think he was ill the second time? It was because he had eaten Bull's dog Ginger, and it was not really cruel, for it is the nature of lions to eat other animals, and he could not live on puppy biscuits and greens any more than you could live on raw turnips.

Now what had happened was this. There were a number of gipsies living in houses on wheels drawn by horses, so that they could travel about without leaving home, and they had a lot of clever performing horses and wild animals with them, and people paid to see the horses perform and watch the animals in their cages, and that is how these gipsies got money to buy food and clothes for themselves and their children. Now in one of the cages there was a mother lion with two little baby lions, and one day one of the little lion cubs was naughty (and it was Sandy), and when his mother was fast asleep he squeezed between the bars of the cage because he smelt a very nice piece of meat that was hanging under one of the carts to keep it cool, and he took it away into a wood and ate it up. Next day the gipsies went off with all their animals and horses, and never noticed that the little cub was missing till they were far, far away; but another man saw the cub, and thought it was a puppy, and kept it for a few days and then sold it to Mr. Bean, because the man already had two dogs and did not want another dog; and that was how it was that Johnny bought a real lion when he thought he had bought a dog.

"'WHAT'S THE MATTER, SIR?' SAID JOHN. 'THERE AIN'T NO HARM IN HIM.' 'NO HARM IN HIM,' CRIED THE VET. 'WHY, CAN'T YOU SEE HE'S A LION!'"

What was to be done now with Sandy? He could not stay at Johnny's school, because he was growing bigger and stronger every day, and one day he might break loose and eat one of the boys, or perhaps, if he was very hungry indeed, even eat the headmaster, and that would be dreadful, and the headmaster's wife would not like it, for headmasters are very rare indeed. So the headmaster wrote three letters —and they were so long I cannot tell you what was in them—but one day, soon after, five men came with a big box with holes in it, and they put a nice bit of meat in the box, and Sandy went into the box to get the meat, and then the men shut the lid and took Sandy away—not growling at all, because the meat was so nice. But Johnny was very sorry, and it made him cry a little when Sandy went, I am afraid. Sandy was really quite happy, because the men took him to the Zoological Gardens, where there are lots of other animals, which he liked very much; and they put him into a warm cage with three other dear little lion cubs and a tiger; and they had a big wooden ball to play with, and they were very happy all day long. Lots of people came to see them, and Sandy liked that, and he had delicious joints of cab-horse, and all the things he liked best to eat. Whenever he was in London, Johnny used to go to see Sandy, and he grew quite big, and Johnny grew up so much, too, that Sandy did not remember him. The first time Johnny went to see Sandy he took a nice mutton chop with him, because that is what lions like best of all to eat, for it is like a nice sugar plum to them. But just as he was going to push it into the cage a tall man said in a very loud voice:—

"Now then, boy, what are you doing?" and the keepers came running up and were very angry with Johnny at first, but afterwards, when Johnny told them who Sandy was, they were not angry. They told Johnny that he must never feed a lion with his hand, because a lion is so big and hungry that it would be quite likely to bite off your hand and eat it with the meat and know nothing about it, but Johnny would know, for he would have only one hand left.

So ever afterwards when Johnny and Marytary went to the Zoological Gardens they never took any food for Sandy, and he grew so big and strong, and roared so loudly for his dinner, that I think Johnny would have been a little afraid to go close up to him, but he never told Marytary he would be afraid.

Simon in Puzzleland.

A CHRISTMAS FANTASY.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

SIMON SHARPE was spending his Christmas alone. It was not from choice, for he was by nature a very sociable bachelor, but a number of unexpected circumstances had for once made it necessary. He had dined, with commendable temperance, and was seated in a comfortable arm-chair—thinking. He thought of all of his friends, past and present, and had good wishes for them all. Something soon turned his mind towards a particularly perplexing puzzle that had fascinated him for a considerable time. "This is just the opportunity I have wanted for solving the thing," he muttered to himself, so he put his unfinished cigar in the ash-tray, closed his eyes, and plunged into the intricacies of his problem.

Then a strange thing happened. "You may call it a dream, a spiritual or spirituous vision, an hallucination, a nightmare—anything you like," he said, when he was afterwards relating to us the affair; "but things are not necessarily unreal because they cannot be made to fit in with our ordinary experiences." The following, then, is Simon's story, condensed from what he told us at great length. We have retained all the puzzles, and such portions of the conversation as we believe will amuse the reader.

Suddenly Simon looked up and saw standing before him a tall, bearded old man, thin and wrinkled, and clad in unfamiliar attire—a well-worn cloak of rich material, with long sleeves, extremely pointed shoes, and a black conical cap. He gazed at our friend with a very ingratiating smile.

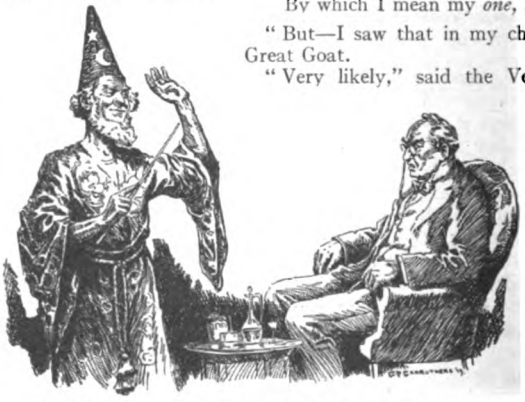
"What can I do for you, sir?" asked Simon, in his pleasantest manner.

"I have come to offer you a little service on my own part, rather than to ask any favour," was the reply. "I know you as one who pleasantly dallies with all sorts of puzzles, and I have bethought me that it might perchance be agreeable to you to spend a few hours in Puzzleland, the unfamiliar country where all these perplexing things come from. Will you come with me?"

"You are very kind," said Simon, "and I am sure I should be very interested. But how do we get there?"

"Simply close your eyes and leave the rest to me."

The manner of locomotion was certainly a mystery, for he stood up, closed his eyes for one moment, and, at the request of his guide, reopened them to discover that they were standing together in a beautiful glade. Here it was summer, and the sun, shining through the quivering leaves of the trees, produced ever-changing kaleidoscopic patterns on the soft sward. The air was laden with the scent of flowers and the song of birds. After a few minutes' walk they came to a large and handsome building of a type of architecture unfamiliar to Simon.



"SIMPLY CLOSE YOUR EYES AND LEAVE THE REST TO ME."

"This," explained his guide, "is the Palace of Perplexity, where all the Puzzles come from. We conceive, develop, and perfect them here, and then send them forth in our own secret way. Your people imagine that they invent them for themselves, but it does not matter."

He then explained that he was himself known as the Lord High Wizard, and he introduced some of the more exalted personages who worked under him. To name only a few of these, there was the Chief Serpent, a great mathematician, so named because he was a wonderful adder; there was the Joker, who infused into all the problems the humorous stuff that makes them entertaining; there was the Head Versifier, who was responsible for the bad rhymes that seem essential for certain puzzles; and there was the Great Goat, whose business was to anticipate all objections and quibbles, which he always introduced in the form, "But—we saw that years ago," "But—the thing is absurd, because——" "But—*did* Moses let the light go out?" and he was called the Goat because of these butts.

They all sat round a large table, each with a huge tome in front of him, to which reference was made on occasion. Simon was invited to ask any questions he chose.

"Have you anything new in word-puzzles?" he queried.

"Well," said the Head Versifier, "just at present we are engaged in perfecting some of the old ones. For example, I think you like charades, but these are generally easy things in three syllables. Here is one of ours in five that may interest you.

A CHARADE.

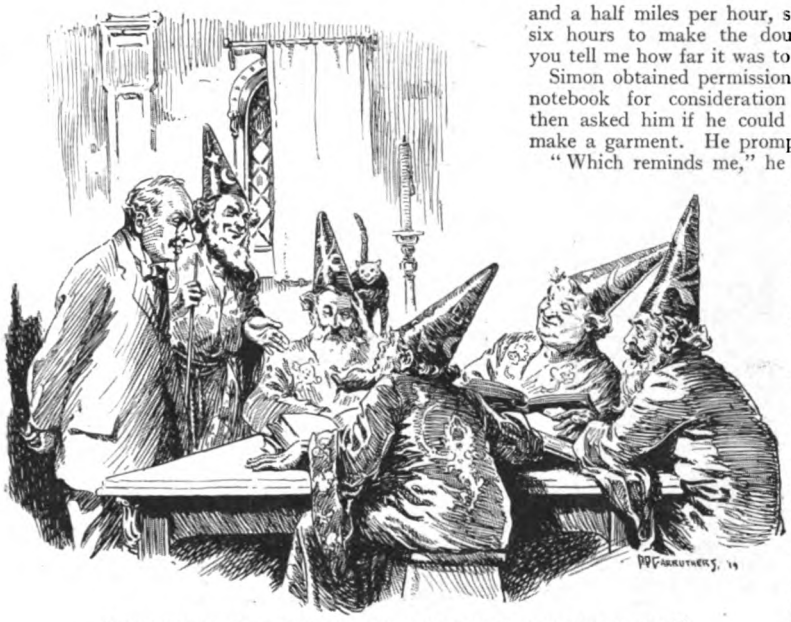
I needed *three* and *four*,
And started for the door,
To get a *three*, *four*, *five* resolved to strive.
I had not gone a square,
When by chance I *total* there,
By which I mean my *one*, *two*, *three*, *four*, *five*.

"But—I saw that in my childhood," broke in the Great Goat.

"Very likely," said the Versifier, "since I only made it yesterday."

"Can you show me anything interesting in arithmetic?" asked Simon, after he had put the charade in his notebook.

"Ah," said the Chief Serpent, "I have just discovered a little curiosity that will, I think, entertain you. You know that the square of 13 is 169. Now reverse the figures and you will find that the square



"SIMON WAS INVITED TO ASK ANY QUESTIONS HE CHOSE."

of 31 is 961. Note also that in each case the sum of the digits in the two numbers is 4 and 16—one the square of the other—while 3 plus 1 is the square of 3 less 1. Wonderful, is it not?

"Can you take two from five and leave only one? This is how we do it. There are five letters in MONEY. If we take away two (M and Y) we leave only ONE.'

"True," said Simon; "but if a post-office thief, instead of taking two letters from money, takes money from two letters, there is nothing left. And that reminds me, I should like to know your answer to the old puzzle of the eleven men in ten beds. You will remember that the host had only ten beds, so he put two men temporarily in the first, then he put the third man in the second, the fourth man in the third, and so on, until he had placed the tenth man in the ninth bed; then he went back to the first room and fetched the eleventh man, whom he put in the tenth bed. So all eleven were accommodated in the ten beds."

"People always miss the correct answer," explained the Chief Serpent. "You see, ten and eleven *are* sometimes the same, though few seem to know it. For example, count your fingers from left to right, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. Now go backwards: 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, and add the five on the other hand—11. But let me give you a new puzzle.

JACK AND JILL.

"You will remember that Jack and Jill were in the habit of fetching their water from the top of a hill—a funny thing to do when you consider that water has an inborn habit of seeking a lower level."

"Perhaps they knew that it was always raining cats and dogs up there," suggested Simon.

"But in that case they might expect it heavier in the town in the valley, with hailing taxicabs. However, we have discovered that on their daily excursion they went up the hill at the rate of one and a half miles per hour and came down at the rate of four and a half miles per hour, so that it took them just six hours to make the double journey. Now, can you tell me how far it was to the top of the hill?"

Simon obtained permission to put the puzzle in his notebook for consideration at leisure. Somebody then asked him if he could join 150 to a tree and make a garment. He promptly replied, "CL-OAK."

"Which reminds me," he said, "to ask you, what are those curious cloaks that you are all wearing?"

"We call them 'dead men,'" replied the Wizard. "Just examine mine and you will discover the reason."

"I see it is very old and—mended."

"Exactly. Men-ded—dead-men."

"But your cloak reminds me more of swearing," insisted Simon. "You can't see why? Well, it is a darned bad habit."

"But still we have good tailors. You must remember that a tailor is not what he seams."

MIKE'S AGE.

"Pat O'Connor is now just one and one-third times as old," broke in the Chief Serpent, "as he was when he built the pig-sty under his drawing-room window."

"Pardon the interruption," said Simon, "but why on earth did he build a sty under his drawing-room window?"

"Why, to keep pigs in, of course. Let us start again. Pat O'Connor is now just one and one-third times as old as he was when he built the sty, and little Mike, who was forty months old when Pat built the sty, is now two years more than half as old as Pat's wife, Biddy, was when Pat built the sty, so that when little Mike is as old as Pat was when he built the sty their three ages combined will amount to just one hundred years. How old is little Mike?"

"Phew!" exclaimed Simon. "I have got it down and must leave it to solve over a quiet cup of tea."

"You will solve it all the better without the tea," said the Wizard. "In fact, that tea-drinking habit is the cause, we think, of half your people's troubles."

"I have lately recorded the opinion in a couplet," said the Head Versifier.

"If, sir, your cares begin to *tease*,
Knock off the *tea* and you'll find *ease*."

At this point a lady entered bearing a beautiful patchwork quilt. She was in a dilemma and sought assistance.

THE LOST STAR.

It seemed that several ladies had contributed to the quilt, their pieces of patchwork being joined together as shown. Now, one lady, the wife of the Royal Astronomer, had contributed a perfectly symmetrical star, but the figure was quite lost in the jumble of pieces. It took the company some minutes to discover the line of stitching that enclosed the star.

"Are you monogamists?" asked Simon.

"Certainly," replied the Wizard. "We don't have sixteen wives, like you people."

"Sixteen!" exclaimed Simon.

"Well, have I not got it correctly: 'four better, four worse, four richer, four poorer'? Surely that makes sixteen."

"In a similar way," said the Joker, "we can show that you have ten fathers. There is your father.

your god-father, your step-father, your father-in-law your two grand-fathers, and your four-fathers—ten in all."

"I see, from your chessboard, that you play chess."

"Yes, and it is a much more reputable game than cards. You see, the players of chess always face two bishops, but the card-player has to play with four knaves. Also, chess players are always above board in their actions."

"Of course you know," said Simon, "that chess was played in the garden of Eden, for we are told that Adam sacrificed a piece and discovered a pretty mate."

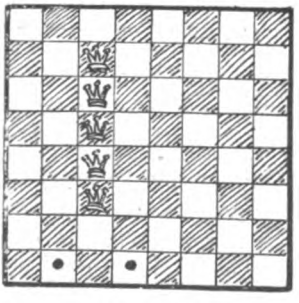
"True," said the Wizard, "but Cain never played chess."

"How is that?"

"Because the game requires skill, and he wasn't Abel."

One of the company then set up a position on the chessboard and showed it to Simon.

THE FIVE QUEENS.



"Here," he explained, "are five queens so placed that there are only two squares" (indicated by dots on our diagram) "on which a black king can be placed without his being in check. It is required to move two of the queens to other squares (by a single queen move each), so that there shall be no square on which a black king could be placed without his being in checkmate."

"But," objected the Great Goat, "how can it be checkmate without a white king being on the board?"

"Strictly true, but it is a case of problematic licence You can easily amend the conditions, but they will not be so readily understood."

The Joker placed a bowl of eggs on the table.

"Ah," said Simon "I see you keep fowls. Do you find them pay for their food?"

"Of course they do. Remember that for every grain they give a peck. But do you know why hens only lay by day?"

"I know it is a habit, but I don't see any particular reason for it."

"Well, it is because at night all hens are roosters. Now, there are seven eggs in this bowl. How am I to divide them equally among seven persons so that one egg still remains in the bowl?"

"I should give six-sevenths of an egg to each person," said Simon.

"But that is dividing six eggs among them—not seven. Yet it is quite easy, if you let one of the seven receive his egg in the bowl."

"I suppose," Simon said, "you all know our popular puzzle of the 'Four Fours.' You have to form a given number by using four fours and arithmetical signs."

"Oh, yes," said the Chief Serpent; "and I will start you off with another that ought to become an equal favourite.

ODDS AND EVENS.

"Try to express all numbers up to 100 by using the odd digits once only and also the even digits (including 0) once only. For example: $(9+3)-(7+\frac{0}{1})=0$ and $(6+4)-(8+2+0)=0$. Again: $(9+3+1)-(7+5)=1$ and $\frac{10}{10}+2-6=1$. Once more, $95+7+1-3=100$ and $40+6\ (8+2)=100$. Just try to do 25 and 50 in the same way, and you will soon become fascinated by the problem."

Simon hit on a solution for 50 right away, but got hung up over 25, though it is equally easy.

"I am sure," said the Lord High Wizard at this point, "we have no desire to tire our respected friend, for we hope he will be induced to pay us other visits in the future. But I should like to show him our problem of the three table-cloths, as it will certainly interest him and his friends.

THE THREE TABLE-CLOTHS

"We have just acquired three beautiful new table-cloths, each of which is exactly four feet square. Now we want to know the length of the side of the largest square table-top that these three cloths will together cover."

"May they be laid in any way?" asked Simon.

"Certainly. The point is simply to cover the surface of the largest possible square table-top. Don't bother about fractions or absolute exactitude. It will be sufficient if you get the answer to the nearest inch."

After an exchange of compliments, Simon stood up and closed his eyes. When he re-opened them, he found himself seated in his own arm chair. "Well," he muttered to himself, "one might do much worse than spend one's Christmas in Puzzleland."

(The answers to the above Puzzles will appear in the next number of THE STRAND MAGAZINE and the solutions to last month's Perplexities will be found on page 595.)

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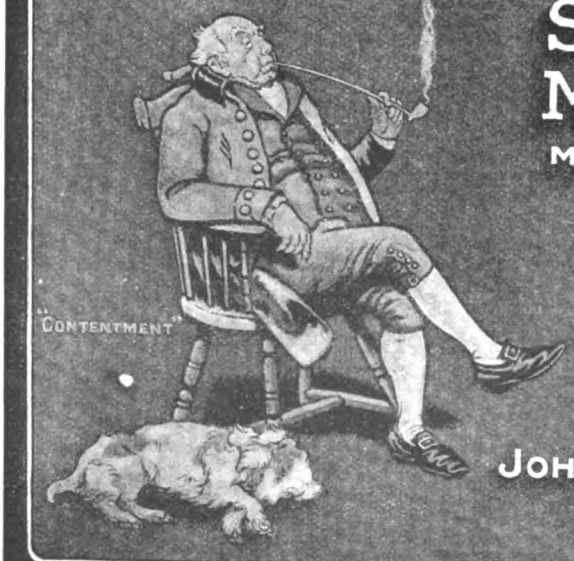

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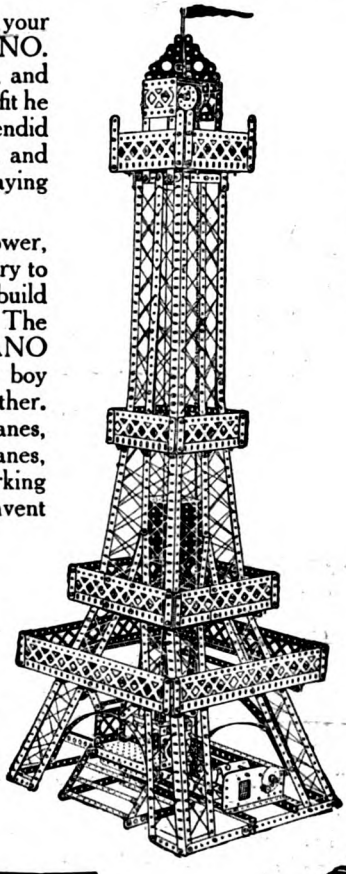

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Extract from Mr. Jolliboy's Diary No. 19.

"Tuesday last to the Court House. Heard the petitioning of the woman Perkins that her husband be soundly rated for the giving of her a blackened eye and other bodily hurt. Did think my summing up wondrous to the point and pleasing to the Bench. "Mistress" said I "the Court decides that your spouse be ordered the Stool of Repentance for six Sabbaths and that you be ordered to fill and henceforth keep filled his pouch with Chairman and, egad, I'll take my oath on't you will never need to trouble this Court with a like petition."

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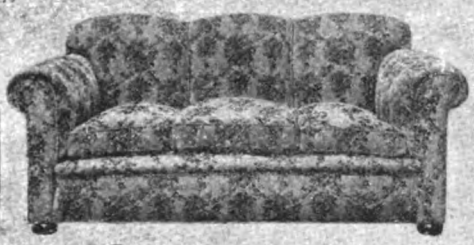

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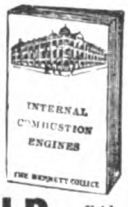

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There are more £1,000 a year positions open than there are men qualified to fill them. Employers everywhere are seeking trained men who have knowledge to fill such positions, but they say such men are difficult to find.

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has made educational history in training men by post to fill big posts in, *e.g.*,

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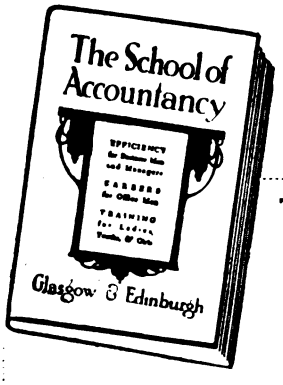

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are the lamps for old eyes and young, because they give brilliancy without glare. They are the lamps for all workers because their light is as helpful as daylight. They are the lamps for the home because their light is cheerful and bright. They are the lamps for the motorist because of their great strength. They are the lamps for the office, the restaurant, the theatre, the shop and the store, because of their brilliancy, attractiveness and adaptability. They are the lamps for **all** because of their great economy in lighting.

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Mazda Lamps are used in the Royal Palaces, the Houses of Parliament, the War Office, the Admiralty, the General Post Office, the Law Courts, and in all the principal works and industrial establishments throughout the country.

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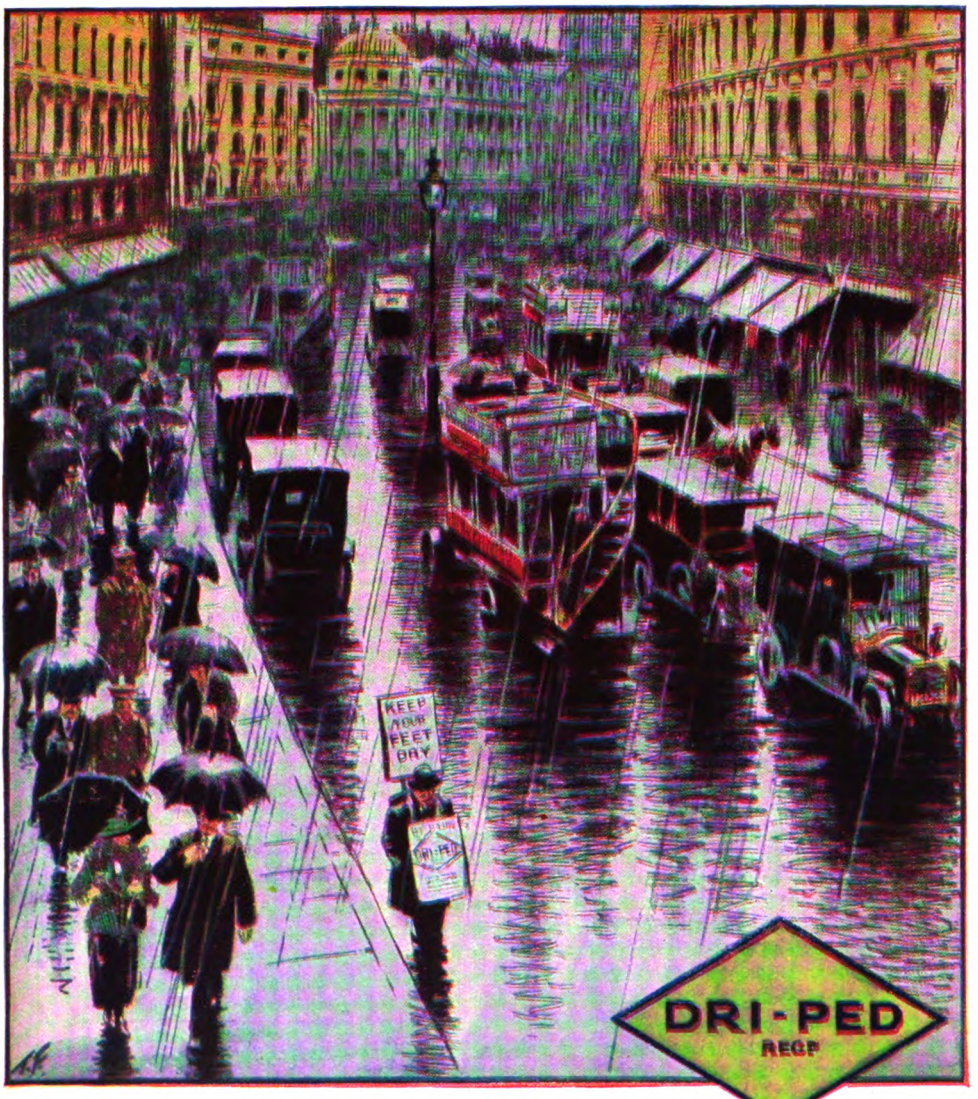

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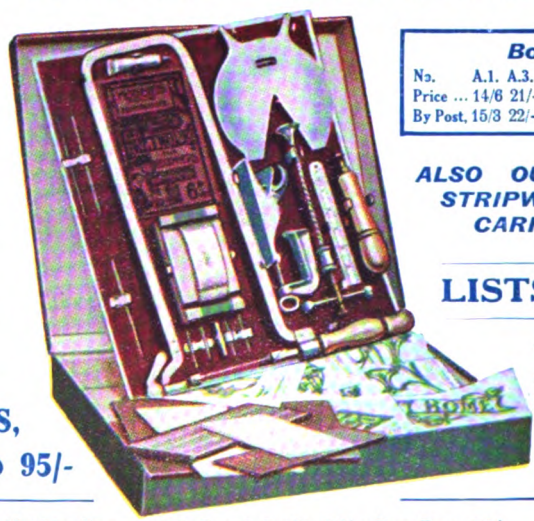

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Truly the keen, self-adjusted "CLEMAK" makes shaving a veritable delight.

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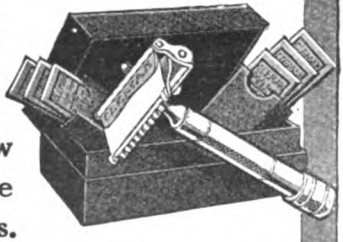

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Milton relieves a cold in the head just as easily, just as quickly as it moves a fruit or ink stain from a white tablecloth. Curious—but you can prove it yourself.

Just add ½ teaspoonful of Milton to a tumbler of tepid water. Use a nasal spray also, and gargle the mouth and throat. You will be astonished at the amount of mucus that comes away, and the clearness of head that immediately follows. Continue the treatment three times a day, and—the cold has left you almost before you know it. The most stubborn colds vanish before Milton. Just like magic!

Get a bottle to-day.

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ANTISEPTIC

makes you wonder every time you use it. Its uses are so many and so different that it seems unbelievable that any one preparation *can* serve so many purposes. And yet it always makes good. Test it yourself. Get a bottle to-day.

Does 101 Things

The hundred and one uses are fully described in the Booklet which comes with each bottle. This booklet is more useful in the home than a dictionary.

1/3 & 2/6 BOTTLE

Your Dealer sells it.

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You know the maxim about "an ounce of prevention." If the thousands who succumbed to Influenza last year had known MILTON (and *used* it) they would be here to-day. Where MILTON *was* employed, the figures of efficiency were really startling. We are sending particulars of these figures to dealers now—they will interest you.

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Do it NOW!

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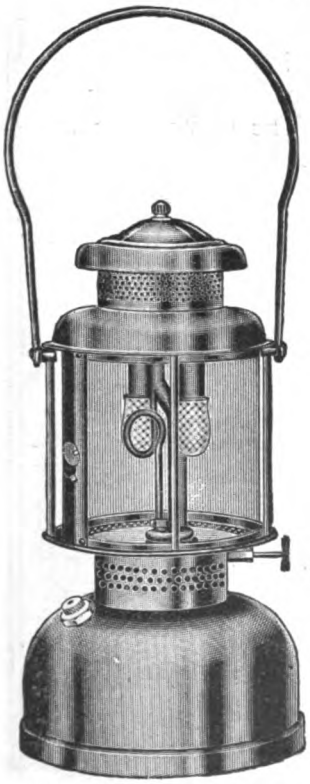
NO EXPENSIVE INSTALLATION
GENERATES ITS OWN GAS
LIGHTS WITH A MATCH

Coleman Quick Lite Portable Lamp



Hurricane Lantern,
£3-10s., post free.

FOR
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BURNS
95 per cent. Air
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Uses two small mantles, giving
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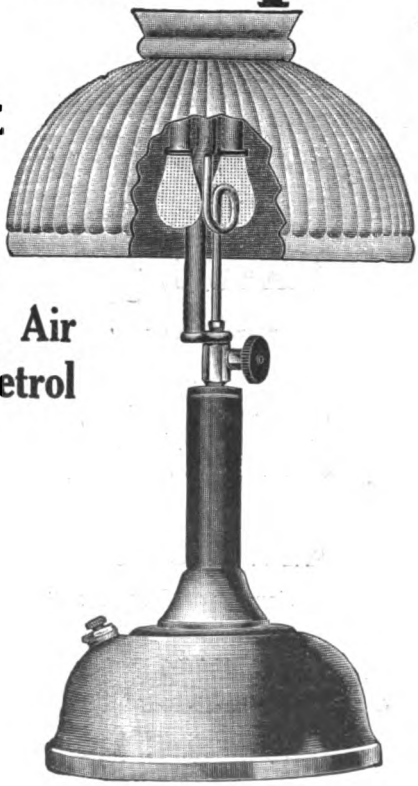
Burns 20 hours one filling. Costs halfpenny an hour.



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£3-15s. complete, post free.

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Let Your Xmas Gifts be Sensible & Serviceable—get a

Berkeley

The Easy Chair that has no Rival

HERE is a gift that is sure to be appreciated, one which brings happy recollections of the giver every time it is used. A lasting gift, a handsome gift.

Get a Berkeley and you will realise the ease, comfort, and value which have made this chair famous in thousands of British homes.

As there is bound to be a great demand for these famous Easy Chairs, place your order NOW.

The Berkeley is designed and constructed so as to give the greatest ease. The springs are steel-coppered, long and flexible, and are fitted in the back, seat, and front edge. The Upholstery is thorough, and a most restful lounge chair is the result. The durable, artistic coverings harmonise with any colour scheme.

PRICE £5 : 5 : 0 or **15/-** with order and balance **17/6** monthly

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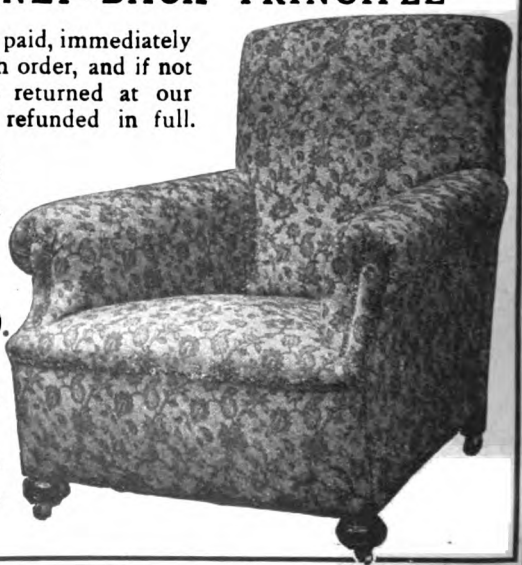
Every Berkeley is delivered carriage paid, immediately on receipt of the first payment with order, and if not completely satisfactory it may be returned at our expense and all money will be refunded in full.



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CALL EARLY!

84/- **SILVER WRIST WATCH.** Elegant design. Perfect timekeeper, fully jewelled and warranted.

75/- 5 fine Diamonds, hall-marked Gold.

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LUMINOUS WRIST WATCH. High-grade fully jewelled and warranted movement. Accurately timed and adjusted. Sterling Silver. **52/6**

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Master the Hair
and look your best

this Christmas festive season. At parties, dances, and similar social gatherings you can always single out the Anzora'd man, with his well-groomed hair neatly brushed with every strand in place no matter how fast and furious the fun may have been.

To use Anzora, rub a little into the scalp every morning, and carefully brush; you will then obtain that smooth, glossy appearance so essential to the well-groomed man. The hair will also remain in perfect position throughout the day's activity.

BEWARE OF SUBSTITUTES.

For those with slightly greasy scalps, Anzora Cream will be found most suitable; if you have a dry scalp we recommend Anzora Viola, which is a careful blending of Anzora Cream with Anzora Oil of Violets.

Sold by all Chemists, Hairdressers, Stores, etc., **1/6** and **2/6** (double quantity) per bottle.

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Willesden Lane,
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ANZORA

MASTERS THE HAIR

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The one essential to feminine beauty is a lovely complexion. This has its foundation in a healthy skin, which in turn is induced and preserved by the use of good, pure soap—Colleen Soap.

Made as it is, entirely from pure, sweet vegetable oils and the soft ash of plants, aromatic with blossom essence, Professor Kirk had reason for writing in his "Papers on Health": "There is something in the composition of Colleen Soap which makes it astonishingly curative and most agreeable on the skin. Lather made from it has the most soothing and delightful effect."

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Others of McClinton's principal lines for women are: Colleen Dental Cream, 1/3 per Tube; Colleen Tooth Powder, 1/3 per tin; Colleen Talcum Powder, 1/3 per Flask; Colleen Toilet and Vanishing Creams, 1/3 per jar each; and Colleen Shampoos (wet or dry), 3d. each, per Carton of 7 Sachets, 1/6.

Use Colleen Soap exclusively for a fortnight and prove for yourself its unique beauty-retaining properties.

Your Chemist sells it.

McClinton's Colleen Soap

7d. per Tablet. Box of 3 Tablets, 1/9.

McCLINTON'S, LTD. (Dept. F), DONAGHMORE, TYRONE.

Your Xmas Gifts

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Solid Silver Cigarette Case from 21/-

Solid Silver Vesta Box from 14/6

for Mother
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Solid Silver Cut Glass Scent Bottle from 10/6

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Flat or Extra Wide from 25/-
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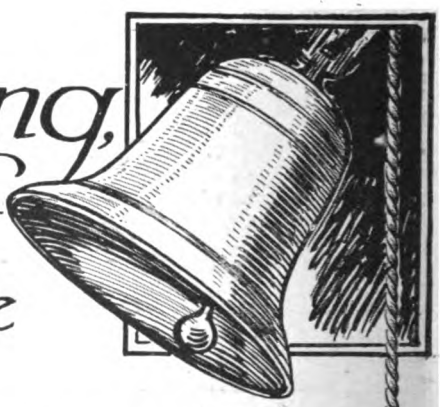
Ding, Dong, Bell!



the Children are off to School

But do not send them out in the cold morning air without a cup of the warmth-sustaining

Fry's PURE BREAKFAST COCOA

MEM. TO MOTHERS

When the alarum clock rings, put the kettle on and make a cup for

Mother and Father too.

Waterman's Ideal Fountain Pen

Among the many tokens of regard none gives greater pleasure to the recipient than a Waterman's Ideal Fountain Pen. Such a gift grows in usefulness. It becomes indispensable, and as the years go by it proves in service the thoughtful action that prompted the choice.

Send a Waterman's Ideal to each of your good friends this Christmas—and with it write all your messages of goodwill.

Three types: "Self-Filling" and "Safety," **15/-** and upwards; "Regular," **10/6** and upwards. See also No. 54, "Self-Filling" Type at **20/-**, with larger nib. In Silver and Gold for Presentation. Of Stationers and Jewellers everywhere. Illustrated List Free on Application to—

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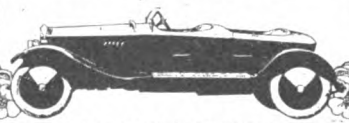
The Sizaire-Berwick is the Car of Courtiers and the Courtier among Cars. It is the automobile of supreme distinction, beauty, and reputation.



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WANA-RANEE has a mystic charm entirely its own and is

A Dream of Oriental Fragrance

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Perfume, 4/6, 9/-, 17/6, 27/6 and 52/6 per bottle ;
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Powder Leaf Books, 7½d. ; Brilliantine, 2/-

Of all Chemists and Perfumers.

J. GROSSMITH & SON
Ltd.,
Distillers of Perfumes
and Fine Soap Makers,
NEWGATE STREET,
LONDON.

A PLEASANT ANTICIPATION.

PLEASANT anticipations are speedily realized by the daily use of Royal Vinolia Toilet Preparations for they ensure a condition of refreshed and vigorous manhood which contributes greatly to the day's achievements.

Royal Vinolia Toilet Preparations enable the user to "wear the rose of youth," and produce an impression of perpetual vigour and freshness.

The following lines are valuable and necessary requirements of a man's morning toilet, and help him to commence the day with a feeling of "top-hole" fitness and exhilaration.

Royal Vinolia Shaving Stick,
Special Metal Case, 1/4; Cardboard Case, 1/-
Royal Vinolia Tooth Paste - Tubes, 7½d. & 1/3
Royal Vinolia Solidified Brilliantine,
Metal Boxes and Tubes, 1/2 each.
Royal Vinolia Talcum Powder - Tins, 1/- & 1/6

When buying Toilet Preparations be sure to get Royal Vinolia. They are all alike perfect.

ROYAL VINOLIA

VINOLIA COMPANY LIMITED, LONDON.

R V 391—23

Extract from Her Letter to Him.

". . . and Jack dear, I have had the most wonderful idea for your Christmas gift. I am sending you a Safety Razor—a Gillette of course."

Extract from His Letter to Her.

". . . the Gillette Razor you chose for me, with that charming good sense which proves how really thoughtful and practical you are, pleases me, my dear Ethel, more than any other present you could have thought of. A thousand thanks for it. I shall use it every morning, and it will always give me happy thoughts of the giver."

On its merits, the Gillette has built up its vast popularity throughout the world. Over 15,000,000 men accomplish their every-morning shave the Gillette way—the most efficient shaving method ever known. The double-edged Gillette blade is unmatched for keenness, and gives a shave so free from "pulling" and irritation that you cannot compare it with any other.

The Gillette Razor is always ready for instant use, and gives a lifetime of reliable and efficient service.

Gillette

SAFETY RAZOR

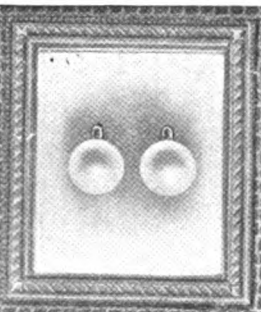
NO STROPPING NO HONING

Gillette Safety Razor Outfits.
Sold everywhere, £1 1s. to £10.

Write for Illustrated Booklet, Free.

GILLETTE SAFETY RAZOR, LTD.,
184-188, Great Portland St., London, W.1.

Ciro Pearls



No. 13.—Pair of Earrings with single Ciro Pearl, which will defy experts. Price **£1-1s.**

No. 1.—Necklet of famous Ciro Pearls (16in. long), price **£1-1s.** Gold Clasp, 2/6 extra.

Pearls are the most fascinating of all Gifts.

CIRO PEARLS have won a place with the lady who loves and appreciates beautiful things.

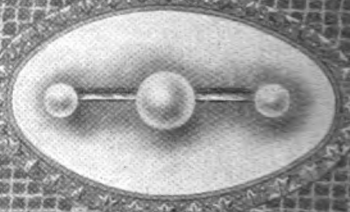
They are now so much in vogue that even if you wear the finest Orient pearls costing fabulous sums, people think you are wearing Ciro's.

Our only address is

39, OLD BOND STREET

(Just off Piccadilly).
First Floor only. We have no Shop.
Telephone: Gerrard 3077.

CIRO PEARLS, Ltd. (Dept. 12)



No. 16.—Three beautiful Ciro Pearls mounted on a platinette bar brooch. Price **£1-1s.**

OUR UNIQUE OFFER.

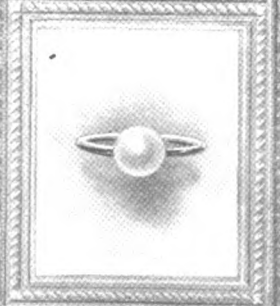
Send any jewel of Ciro Pearls as a present, and if it fails to please, return it to us and we will refund you your money.

We will send you a necklet, ring, or any jewel with Ciro Pearls, on receipt of **£1-1s.**

Put it beside any real pearls or any other artificial pearls, and if it is not equal to the genuine or superior to the other artificial pearls, return it to us and we will refund your money.

Our provincial customers may send their orders by the post, and will receive the same attention as if they called upon us personally.

Our New Illustrated Booklet No. 12 will interest you.



No. 13.—Ring with fine Ciro Pearl, in gold or platine. Price **£1-1s.**

No. 4.—Beautiful Ciro Pearl Scarf Pin, either round or pear shaped Price **£1-1s.**

Strength *and* Beauty are always admired

AT the theatre, in the ball-room or at any social gathering well-developed men and women are always admired. The beauty of their graceful, well-rounded figures—splendidly healthful—is irresistibly attractive.

Would you too like to have a figure of which you could justly feel proud?

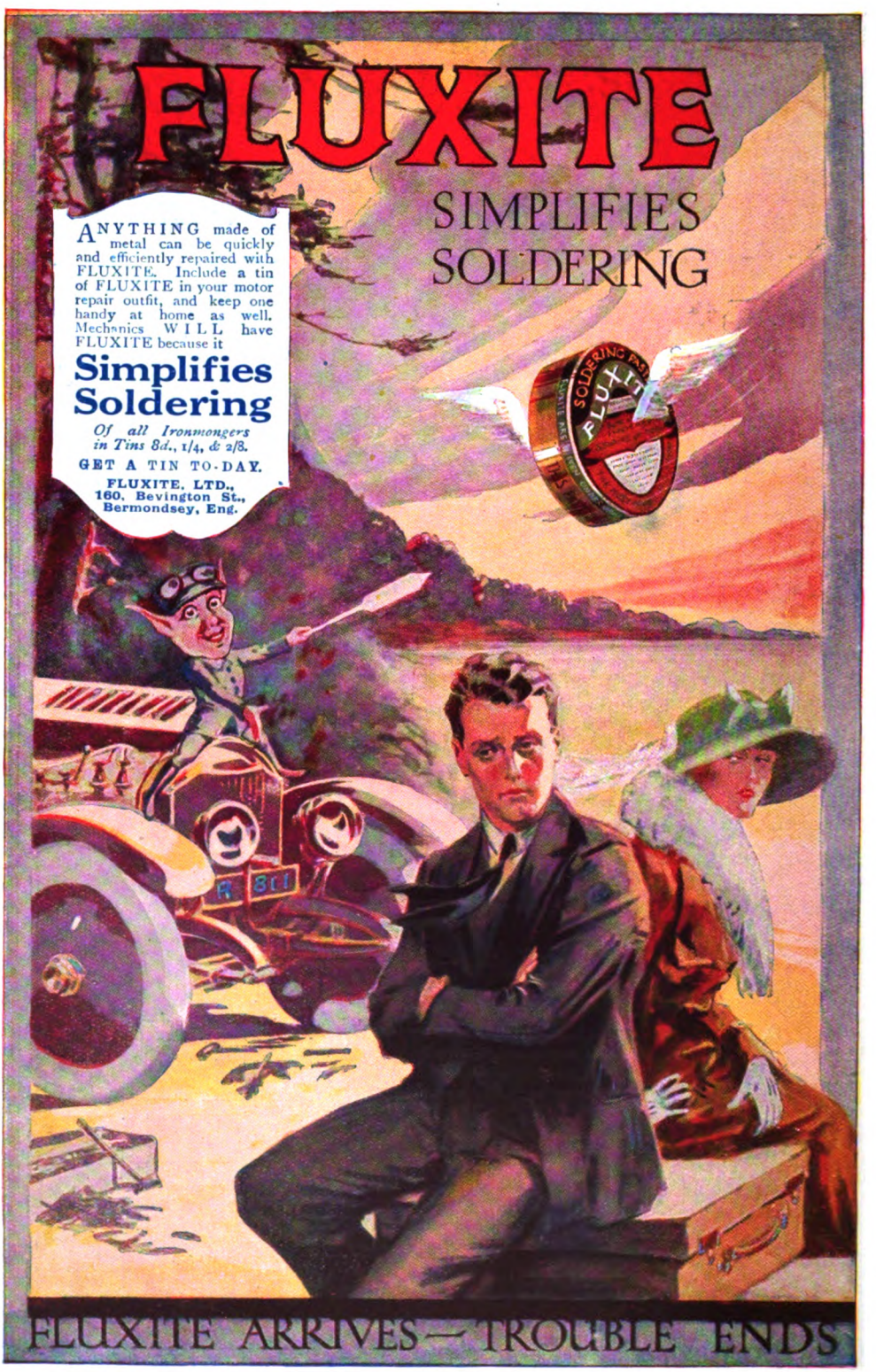
If so, you should try Sargol. It will make you nice and shapely. Sargol increases cell growth, makes perfect assimilation of food, and as a necessary result builds up muscles and solid, healthy flesh and rounds out the figure.

It is a beauty maker as well as a form builder and nerve strengthener. Men increase their nerve power and strength, and develop many pounds of good healthy flesh. Sargol is not an experiment. For years it has helped to make strong, sturdy men and beautiful, healthy women. Sargol is put up in tablet form and is easy and pleasant to take.

If you want to have the winsome charm of the comely and well-formed, by all means give it a trial. Sargol is sold and recommended by first-class Chemists everywhere, or will be sent Post Free direct from our own Laboratories upon receipt of price, 3/- a box or 6 boxes for 15/-

The SARGOL COMPANY,

10, Phoenix Place, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.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SIMPLIFIES
SOLDERING
ANYTHING made of metal can be quickly and efficiently repaired with FLUXITE. Include a tin of FLUXITE in your motor repair outfit, and keep one handy at home as well. Mechanics WILL have FLUXITE because it
Simplifies Soldering
Of all Ironmongers in Tins 8d., 1/4, & 2/8.
GET A TIN TO-DAY.
FLUXITE, LTD., 160, Bevington St., Bermondsey, Eng.
SOLDERING PASTE
FLUXITE
FLUXITE ARRIVES—TROUBLE ENDS

Waiting! £1,000 a year for Art work.

Let me help you to get it

HASSALL

GOOD JOB WAITING.

The dearth of poster artists is greatly deplored in the kinema trade.

"We realise that to attract the public we must exhibit good posters," said a member of a distributing firm yesterday. "We have many complaints of some of the inartistic type already put out.

"We have a large number of films which need bright, attractive, and original advertising, but we cannot obtain it. The work is waiting for the artists. There will be even greater scope for them as British production increases.

"A man with original ideas who can keep to simple expression could easily make £1,000 a year at this moment."

The "Daily Mail," Sept. 11th, 1919.

"ORIGINAL IDEAS"—"simple expression"—the things which will bring the £1,000 a year—form the very basis of Mr. Hassall's teaching. Look at Mr. Hassall's own posters—the posters which are famous in every corner of the world and have earned untold wealth for commercial firms—and you will see how Mr. Hassall himself carries his ideas into practice.

And like his own work, Mr. Hassall's tuition is *original.* He teaches you to break away from the old conventions; he teaches you to be a *creative* artist. Many of his pupils who thought their work "would never be good enough to sell" are now getting high prices from commercial firms. Others who "could not get ideas" are now doing original work of remarkable character under Mr. Hassall's inspiration.

Copy this sketch for a free criticism

Let Mr. Hassall help you, too, to make your name in Art. There is £1,000 a year waiting—why not claim it for yourself?

Artists like "Fish," of the "Tatler," Gladys Peto, A. E. Horne, Vernon Hill, C. Bryant, Hawley Morgan, Harry Low, and many others who have worked under me, are drawing big incomes to-day.

It does not matter where you live; whether you are a beginner or an advanced student; whether you wish merely to get pleasure from sketching or to become a highly paid commercial artist, John Hassall, and the brilliant artists who collaborate with him, can show you the way to success.

POST THIS COUPON TO-DAY

or send a letter if you do not want to cut the paper, to
Mr. JOHN HASSALL,
The John Hassall Correspondence Art School, Ltd.,
3, Stratford Studios, Kensington, W.8.

I enclose you a Drawing for your free criticism.

Please send me, free of all cost, full particulars of how to become a successful poster and black-and-white artist, and how to get my work exhibited. Please add a copy of your illustrated book, "THE JOHN HASSALL WAY."

Name.....

Address.....

S.M. 1.12.19.

Xmas Gifts of unfailing charm & increasing Value

At Saqui & Lawrence's

discriminating Gift-seekers who appreciate the lasting charm and increasing value of beautiful Diamond Jewellery, will find a fascinating display of Gifts that are certain to please. Everything is marked at practically

wholesale prices

Call and make an early selection!

Handsome Pearl and lustrous Diamonds. **£8 8s.**

Diamond of the first water. Richly carved setting. **£10**

Diamond Crossover. 3 fine stones **£10**

Magnificent Cluster Ring. 9 fine Brilliants in new design setting. **£14**

2 Lustrous Diamonds and handsome Ruby. **£15**

Secure your Xmas Gifts early!

Charming Gold Pendant. Set with 2 Rubies, 2 Pearls, and lustrous Diamonds **£30**

Every purchase is subject to your approval for one month.

Silver Wrist Watch, fully jewelled lever movement, 5 years' warranty. Moiré silk strap. **80/-**

Exquisite Diamond and Pearl Brooch. Charming new design. **£10**

Fine Art Catalogue of exquisite Gift Suggestions sent Free on request.

£16

Gold Bracelet Watch. Tonneau design. High-grade, fully jewelled lever movement. 5 years' warranty.

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54, STRAND: Opposite Charing Cross Hospital.
178, STRAND: Op. Aldwych.
HAMMERSMITH: 3A, King St.
HOLLOWAY: 454, Holloway Road.
KILBURN: 134, High Road.
KING'S CROSS: 276 & 281, Pentonville Road.

BOURNEMOUTH: 104, Old Christchurch Rd.
BRIGHTON: 75, North St.
BRISTOL: 3, Wine Street.
CARDIFF: 15, Duke Street.
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EASTBOURNE: 110, Terminus Road.
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Saqui & Lawrence LTD

LONDON'S LARGEST JEWELLERS

"Unusually Nice!"

Barker & Dobson's Lunch Chocolate has a place at table secured by its fascinating flavour. It is aptly described as the unusually nice chocolate, and it is so because of its sterling quality.

BARKER & DOBSON'S
Lunch Chocolate

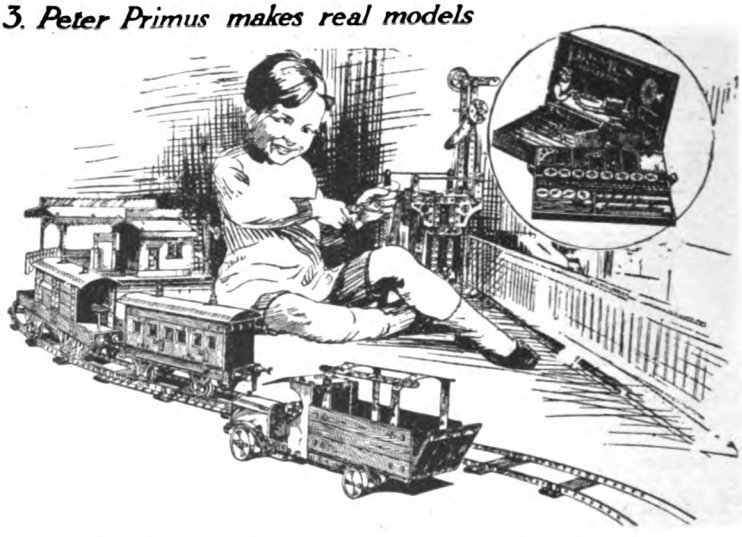
may now be obtained at almost every confectioner's throughout the land in its well-known yellow packages. Prices **9d., 1/6** and **3/-**

"Joins with the dessert at any well-served dinner."

Manufactured by BARKER & DOBSON, Ltd., at their Chocolate Works, Everton, Liverpool, where is also manufactured Barker & Dobson's Genuine Everton Toffee.

Adventures of Peter Primus

3. Peter Primus makes real models



I DON'T mind if it is too wet to go into the garden. I can make things with my Primus outfit. It has girders, plates, brackets, wheels, axles, bolts and nuts and a screw-driver—*and lots of wooden pieces,* too. I can build things just like real engineers do. I never get tired of playing with:—

PRIMUS ENGINEERING

The BRITISH TOY *for the* BRITISH BOY

Primus is *the* toy for your boy. It satisfies his desire to make things. It occupies his hands, makes him exercise his brain—and keeps him out of mischief

The guinea outfit, the popular edition, contains 267 wood and metal parts and makes endless models. There are cheaper sets at 10/6 & 7/6 —larger sets at 37/6, 57/6 & 87/6. Manual of instructions in each Box.

Sold by all Stores, Toy Shops and Sports Outfitters.

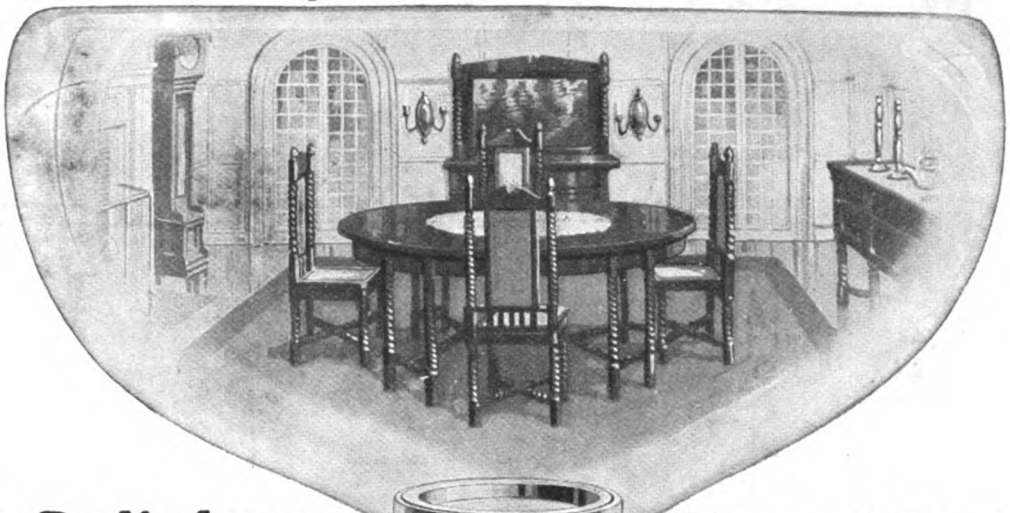
The PRIMUS Engineering Booklet Post Free from the Manufacturers:

W. BUTCHER & SONS, LTD.,

CAMERA HOUSE, FARRINGDON AVENUE, E.C. 4

"Look-it's WOOD and METAL!"

Johnson's Prepared Wax
Liquid and Paste



Polishes

With Johnson's Prepared Wax you can make and keep your home attractive. Try it on your piano, furniture, woodwork, floors and linoleum. It cleans, polishes and protects the finish, adding years to its life and beauty.

Write for free descriptive circular.

Everything

Johnson's Prepared Wax is made in Paste, Liquid and Powdered form. Use the Paste for floors and the Liquid for furniture. Johnson's Powdered Wax sprinkled over any floor gives a perfect dancing surface.

In 2/6, 4/- and 8/- sizes.

There is no oil in Johnson's Prepared Wax—consequently it does not gather or hold the dust—and it never becomes soft and sticky in the hottest weather or from the heat of the body. It is not only a polish but a splendid preservative.

S. C. JOHNSON & SON, WEST DRAYTON, Middlesex.

Onoto Pens

Self Filling——Safety.

The Simplest Pen to USE.

The Onoto is the *one* Fountain Pen that never gives a moment's trouble.

You can regulate the flow of ink to suit your hand-writing.

When you have finished writing, a twist with the finger and thumb seals the reservoir so that the ink *cannot* escape until you yourself release it.

When you need more ink, your Onoto will fill itself in a flash from any ink supply. It cleans itself in filling.

Presentation Onoto Pens (at prices up to £8 8s.), beautifully chased, and sold in charming silk lined cases, make ideal gifts for weddings, birthdays, and for Christmas.

THOMAS DE LA RUE & CO., LTD.
Bunhill Row, London, E.C.1.

The Standard ALL-BRITISH FOUNTAIN PEN 15/-

The All-British Fountain Pen

Ingersoll

Give them all *Ingersolls* this Xmas

The practical utility of the INGERSOLL Radiolite makes it just the gift for every member of the family. For mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers there is an INGERSOLL Radiolite watch to suit their individual needs. No other gift will prove so useful, so acceptable and be so certain of appreciation as an INGERSOLL Radiolite.

Built to keep accurate time, INGERSOLL Radiolites give the maximum of watch service. Day and night the time is kept in sight; the luminous hands and figures glow brightly even in pitch darkness. The steady accuracy, the reliability and great dependability of INGERSOLL Radiolites is assured by the system of inspection and tests adopted throughout the INGERSOLL organisation. Sold by high class watch dealers throughout the Kingdom Illustrated Catalogue sent post free.

INGERSOLL WATCH CO., Ltd.,
(Dept. 258)
170, Regent St., London, W.1.

Ingersoll Radiolite

Shows the time in the dark.

INGERSOLL
Waterbury Radiolite
A Handsome 12 size Watch in solid nickel case, jewelled at the balance.
Price, **40/-**

INGERSOLL
Wrist Radiolite
With strap.
Price, **30/**

INGERSOLL
Yankee Radiolite
A sturdily built Watch to stand jolts and jars and keep accurate time.
Price, **20/-**

ABSOLUTE and CERTAIN CURE FOR CHILBLAINS.

WHY NOT AVOID CHILBLAIN MISERIES DURING THE COMING WINTER BY USING GRASSHOPPER OINTMENT, WHICH POSITIVELY DRAWS OUT THE INFLAMMATION AND STOPS THE ITCHING AND PAIN?

THE chilblain season is now here, and to many this is a period of intense misery. But it is misery which is easily avoidable. We have asserted above that Grasshopper Ointment is an absolute and certain cure for chilblains, and the huge demand which occurs for the Ointment as soon as the cold weather sets in is substantial evidence of the truth of our assertion.

Grasshopper cures chilblains by drawing out the inflammation which causes them. This is the only way they can be cured. The worst cases of Chilblains, broken or unbroken, are curable with Grasshopper. Two or three applications are generally sufficient to draw out the inflammation, and allay the itching and pain. In view of this, let us urge you to procure a box of Grasshopper before the severe weather arrives. Then by applying it as soon as your feet get chilled you will escape the usual chilblain miseries.

Grasshopper Ointment has been found effective in treating any inflammatory trouble. Well rubbed into sore or swollen feet speedy relief is assured.

Grasshopper Ointment may be obtained from Boots', Timothy White's, Taylor's Drug Co., and from other Stores and Chemists, at **1/3** a box, or post free S. M. Albert & Co., 73, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

Of Interest to Every Woman

AN EXCLUSIVE AND PROVED METHOD OF HAIR-BEAUTY CULTIVATION.

FREE 1,000,000 HARLENE HAIR-DRILL OUTFITS

EVERY gift of Nature is perfect, and of all the bounteous gifts that Nature has given to women—the hair is undoubtedly the most highly prized. Yet, strange to say, it is so often neglected. Nature exacts a penalty for every neglect and human failing, and women have to pay the penalty for neglect of the hair in the resultant dull, lifeless, unhealthy condition of what should be the "crowning glory of the woman beautiful"—the hair.

There is no necessity to endure impoverished hair, for while Nature has provided the gift, Science, which is Nature's assistant, has devised and perfected in "Harlene Hair-Drill' an unfailing remedy for all hair ailments, lack-lustre, and other defects. And the news is now published that all readers may test this scientific yet simple and easy method free by merely forwarding the coupon below.

All classes of Society are now regularly practising "Harlene Hair-Drill" abroad and at home—indeed all are able to banish the "too old at 30, 40, or 50" appearance. Everyone, both ladies and gentlemen, are invited to accept the Free Gift Offer made in this announcement. Detach and post the Coupon below, and you will receive "Harlene Hair-Drill" Outfit Free.

MILLIONS PRACTISE "HAIR-DRILL."

Millions of men and women throughout the world now practise "Harlene Hair-Drill" daily. They have tested and proved that this unique preparation, "Harlene," and its agreeable method of application, "Hair-Drill," is the surest way to overcome Scurf and Dryness, Scalp Irritation, Brittle, Splitting Hair, and Over-Greasiness, Falling, that it is also the easiest way to ensure the perfect growth of long, silky, beautiful hair in abundance, glossy and bright.

3. A bottle of "Uzon" Brilliantine, which gives a final touch of beauty to the hair, and is especially beneficial to those whose scalp is inclined to be "dry."

4. The "Hair-Drill" Manual, giving complete instructions.

Commence at once to help your hair to health and beauty. Young women can maintain their hair in abundant beauty, and women of more mature years can regain all the lost lustre and health, whether it arises from illness, worry, overwork, or the natural passing of years.

"HARLENE" FOR MEN ALSO.

Every man desires to preserve a fresh, smart, crisp appearance, and in this respect the care of the hair is essential. The Free Gift offer made in this announcement is open to every man, and they will find this two-minutes-a-day "Harlene Hair-Drill" a delightfully pleasant and beneficial toilet exercise.

When you have once personally experienced the exceptional advantages of "Hair-Drill" you can always obtain further supplies of "Harlene" at 1s. 1½d., 2s. 9d., and 4s. 9d. per bottle; "Cremex" Shampoo Powders at 1s. 1½d. per box of 7 (single packets 2d. each); "Uzon" Brilliantine at 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. per bottle, from all Chemists and Stores, or direct from Edwards' Harlene, Ltd., 20, 22, 24, and 26, Lamb's Conduit Street, W.C.1.

YOUR "HAIR-HEALTH" GIFT.

Obtain for yourself, without cost or obligation beyond a 4d. stamp for return carriage on the Parcel, a Free Trial Outfit, comprising:

1. A bottle of "Harlene," the true liquid food and tonic for the Hair.

2. A packet of the marvellous hair and scalp cleansing "Cremex" Shampoo, which prepares the head for "Hair-Drill."

"HARLENE" FREE GIFT COUPON.

Detach and Post to EDWARDS' HARLENE, Ltd., 20, 22, 24, and 26, Lamb's Conduit Street, London, W.C.1.

Dear Sirs,—Please send me your free "Harlene" Four-Fold Hair-Growing Outfit as announced. I enclose 4d. in stamps for postage and packing to my address.

Strand Magazine, December, 1919.

NOTE TO READER.

Write your full name and address clearly on a plain piece of paper, pin this coupon to it, and post as directed above. (Mark envelope "Sample Dept.")

By Appointment
CARRON

Be independent of the high cost, poor quality and scarcity of coal, by installing a CARRON Electric Fire in your home.

They are always ready for use and ensure an instant comforting heat — day or night — without dirt, dust, smoke, or labour.

Sold by all Electrical Engineers, Contractors, etc.

No. 36N Illustrated and descriptive Electric Appliance Pamphlet, free on request.

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INCORPORATED BY ROYAL CHARTER 1759

WORKS: CARRON, STIRLINGSHIRE.
Branch Works: Phœnix Foundry, Sheffield.
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"A Touch of the Switch does it!"

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THE TYPEWRITER SPECIALISTS.

ALL MAKES on HIRE, HIRE PURCHASE, BOUGHT, SOLD, REPAIRED, and EXCHANGED.

TYPEWRITER AND OFFICE SUPPLIES AT BARGAIN PRICES.
Write for LIST No. 11 of Typewriters, Duplicators, and Adding Machines.

TAYLOR'S, Ltd., 74, Chancery Lane, London, W.C.2.

EST. 1884. NEW & SECONDHAND OFFICE FURNITURE. 'Phone Holborn 4811—Four lines.

The Dulcitone

Regd.

THE LIGHT-WEIGHT PIANO THAT NEVER NEEDS TUNING

THE DULCITONE has a delightful harp-like tone, with keys and touch as in a good piano, and is just the thing for an evening's music by the fireside, in the schoolroom, hospital, or on board ship.

The Dulcitone is equally invaluable at home and abroad, as the tuning forks which produce the sounds are unaffected by change of climate. It weighs only 60 lbs., takes up the minimum of floor space (36" by 18"), and has a compass of 5 octaves.

Price £36 net.

Supplied by leading music merchants, or sent promptly by the makers, carriage paid, to any part of Great Britain on receipt of remittance.

To Foreign Buyers.—We pack carefully, insure, and send freight paid to any shipping port abroad for £5 extra, cash with order.

Write to-day for particulars to the Sole Makers :

THOS. MACHELL & SONS, 49, Great Western Road, Glasgow

MATERNITY WEAR (self-adjusting)

Made to measure at ordinary prices. Wide range of styles and materials. The "**Evesham**" model shown from **50/-**. Also Skirts from **18/11**. Gowns, Costumes, etc. Write for Patterns, Designs, and Easy Self-Measurement Forms, also Free Catalogue of Infants' Layettes, Accouchement Sets, Nursery Furniture and Requisites, and everything for mother and baby.

WOOD BROS. *Maternity Specialists*
14, St. Mary's St., MANCHESTER.
When ordering state length, back and front, waist and hip measurements, also present measurements.

Robinson & Cleaver's
Christmas Handkerchief List
is yours for the asking

WRITE to-day for a copy: sent post free with samples. It describes our famous Irish Linen Handkerchiefs and also cheaper examples from 2/6 per dozen. We illustrate No. B.B.5. Ladies' fine cotton Hemstitched Handkerchiefs with hand embroidered initial. Size about 12 inches with narrow hem. Per dozen 7/3.

M

Robinson & Cleaver, Ltd.,
36L, DONEGALL PLACE, BELFAST.

THE PATENT Treasure Cot

Snug, Hygienic, Portable, Complete protection from Draughts and Glaring Light. Folds up. Easily washed. : : All British Made. : :

Price from **30/-** *carr. paid.*

Sent on 7 days' approval per parcel post.

Complete layettes in the most fashionable and daintiest styles at very moderate prices.

The . . . Treasure Playground

A 2 ft. high wooden railed enclosure, made in sections. Folds flat. Allows Baby freedom to crawl and play.

Price (six sections) **34/6**
Carriage paid.
Sent on 7 days' appro.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE POST FREE ON APPLICATION.

Treasure Cot Co., Ltd. (Dept. U.1)
124, VICTORIA ST., LONDON, S.W.1

TWILIGHT SLEEP NURSING HOMES LTD.

Twilight Sleep painless maternity is a boon which should be accorded to every mother and child. Prospective parents are invited to call or write for illustrated booklet of the leading Twilight Sleep Home in Great Britain. Resident physician. Best equipped. Most comfortable. Recommended by the medical profession.

LADY SECRETARY (Office 12), Bushey Lodge, TEDDINGTON, MIDDLESEX.

UGLY NOSES.

UGLY NOSES. — My Patent Nose Machines improve ugly noses of all kinds. Send stamped envelope for particulars and testimonials.

RED NOSES. — My long-established treatment absolutely cures. Recommended by medical authority. **4/-** post free. Foreign, **1/6** extra.

C. LEES RAY, 10E, Central Chambers, Liverpool.

DON'T SNEEZE!
Dr. MACKENZIE'S CATARRH CURE SMELLING BOTTLE

Relieves and QUICKLY CURES COLD IN THE HEAD, Nasal Catarrh, Neuralgia in the Head, Faintness, Dizziness, &c. A SPECIFIC FOR **HEADACHE.** Sold by all Chemists and Stores. Price 2/-, or post free in United Kingdom, 2/3, from MACKENZIE'S Cure Depot, READING. Refuse Worthless Imitations.

For illness and convalescence.

BENGER'S Food

for INFANTS, INVALIDS & the AGED.

Benger's Food is not a "Patent Food"—Its composition is well known to the Medical Profession.

It is made on strictly scientific lines — specially to *nourish* and sustain when the system is too weak to digest the usual foods of life.

In illness and convalescence, when "out of sorts," Benger's Food is dainty and delicious and always beneficial.

BENGER'S FOOD LTD., Manchester.

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If anything is ever proved by experience it is the value of

Hall's Wine

THE SUPREME TONIC RESTORATIVE

It goes without saying that no responsible medical man would think of recommending Hall's Wine unless there were forthcoming undeniable proof of its efficacy. Every one of the vast number of medical testimonials received in favour of Hall's Wine, in cases of physical weakness, nerve-strain, convalescence, etc., is a statement of personal experience. Could anything be more convincing than the following extracts from typical letters?

Recommended to Hundreds.

"In general weakness and nerve weakness I have found Hall's Wine to be particularly efficacious, and I have recommended it to hundreds."

From an M.R.C.S.

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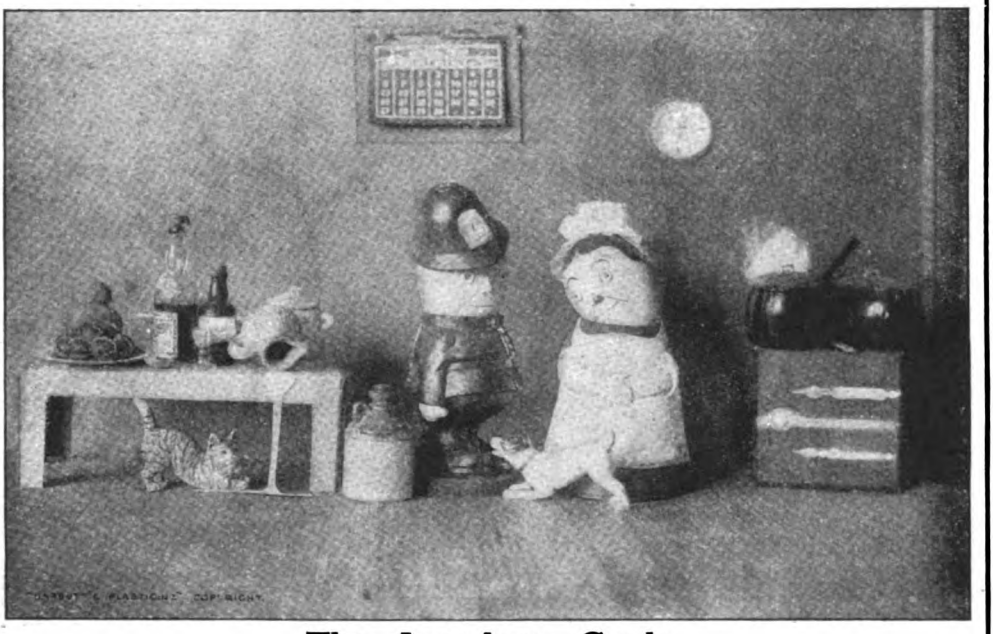

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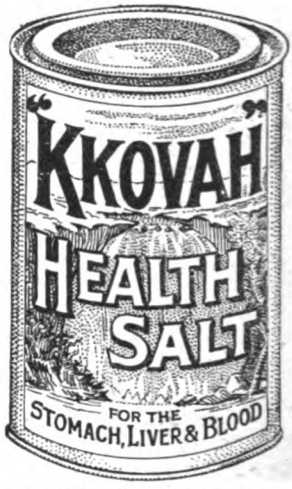

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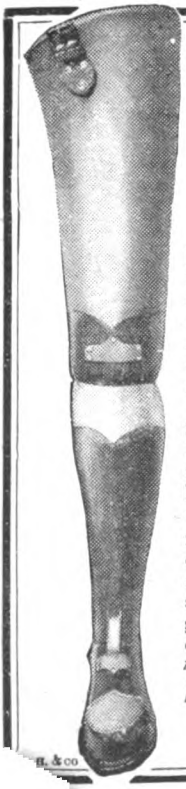

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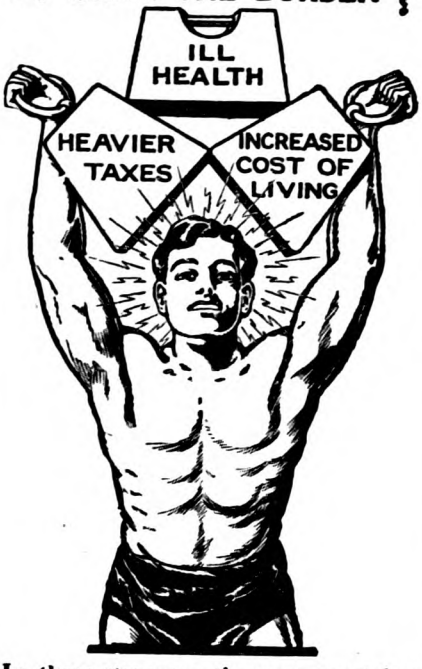

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25/- TO 70/- PER PAIR.

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and comfortable. Converted in a moment from a substantial, useful walking stick to a comfortable seat. When shooting, fishing, or golfing, carry one of

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CARASADA
Petit Corona.
Boxes of 50.
65/-
per 100
33/-
per 50

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Send your Friends Cigars this Xmas

The Cigars with the Soft Havana flavour

Carasada Cigars

The Best 8D. Cigars sold in this Country

An altogether fascinating cigar possessing a delightfully smooth Havana flavour. Made in England from the choicest Vuelta Abajo Havana Tobacco, and always sold in perfect condition.

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BOTH SOLD AT **65/-** PER 100

33/- Box of 50. **3/10** Sample Box of 5.

POST FREE IN EACH CASE.

Duty free, post paid from Bond, to the Army of Occupation, **49/-** *for* 100, **24/6** *for* 50.

Many smokers prefer them to the expensive Havana, not because of their lower cost, but simply because the matured Havana has a too pronounced heaviness which does not suit their palates.

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(Opposite the Royal Exchange.)

WARD ROOM MESSES on H.M. SHIPS can order a minimum quantity of 200 Carasada Cigars at a cost of £4 18s., providing order is accompanied by Form 64.

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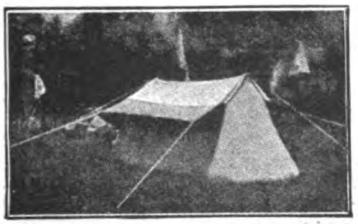

"IMPROVED GIPSY" TENT.

Note extension back and double roof, also overlap to carry rain from tent base. (Regd. Design.) Weight 40 ounces. Price **£6 6s.** complete with poles, pegs, and guy lines.

FOR 2 OR 3 PERSONS AT HOME OR ABROAD. EASILY CARRIED.

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"I cycle-camped for a month through France, Switzerland, and Germany with a friend. We met with all sorts of weather, but the tent proved to be perfectly watertight. I am 6ft. 2in., and my friend well above the average, but we found the accommodation inside the tent ample, even in wet weather. The double roof keeps out the heaviest rain indefinitely. **The tent is very strongly and carefully made, and wonderfully cheap."**

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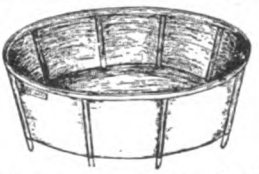

Folds up very compactly. Small enough to go into overcoat pocket

No.			Price
1	Diam. 28 in.,	weight 15 ozs. ..	**28/-**
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"So comfortable for standing long hours. Cannot do without them."

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A. Plain Shoes (without Strapping) ..	3/5	3/7	3/9
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Jute Shoes cheapest while leather so dear.

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Of all Chemists and Stores, and from YARDLEY, 8, New Bond Street, London. *Perfumery and Fine Soap Makers since 1770.*

PRICES :
2oz., 3/6 ; 4oz., 6/6 ; 6oz., 9/6.
Wickered Bottles :
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Paris Physician Discovers New Process Which Restores Original Colour in 30 Minutes. No Shampoo Required Before Using.

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A DISCOVERY that will restore youthful looks to hundreds of thousands of persons underlies the latest success of a Paris physician-scientist. Persons who look from ten to twenty years older than they should by reason of Greyness can now have the lost colour restored *inside* each and every Grey or Faded Hair upon their heads, permanently, and in less than 30 minutes.

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The recipe was given to Mackinnon of Strathaird out of gratitude for hiding and helping the Prince to escape from Skye, and the secret of its preparation has been carefully preserved by generations of the Mackinnon family.

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To be had from Wine Merchants, Stores, etc., in case and bottle. If any difficulty in obtaining, write for name of nearest agent.

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The Hot Water Bottle With a Name

Highest Quality. Perfect Construction. CANNOT LEAK Easy Safe & Quick Filling. Obtain from your Chemist.

PAREX on each in RED TRIANGLE

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No Washer Required

Leakage Impossible

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SELF-GENERATING ELECTRIC CYCLE LAMP.

The lamp that produces, by the movement of the cycle, an inexhaustible supply of electricity to brilliantly illuminate head lamp and rear lamp at no cost whatever. Lasts years without attention; avoid inferior foreign-made imitations

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All Post Free.

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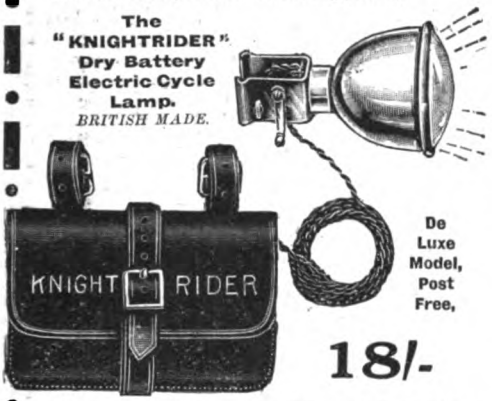
"In the winter of 1913/14 I purchased a 'Voltalite' from you which has been of the very greatest service to me, and which has always given me the greatest satisfaction, always reliable and working perfectly."

The "KNIGHTRIDER" Dry Battery Electric Cycle Lamp.
BRITISH MADE.



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We also supply the **"Princolite"** fitted with Accumulator giving 12 hours' light at a charge, and which can be recharged innumerable times, **15/-** *Post Free* When ordering, state whether Head or Rear Lamp is required.

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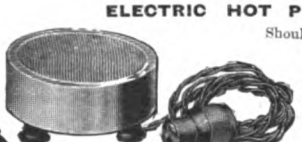

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Give comfort to the toes and wear longer.
We still make to measure where necessary, and execute repairs.

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improves as well as controls the hair.

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TOZANA
HAIR FOOD

which not only controls the most unruly hair but *feeds the roots*, stimulates the growth, removes excessive greasiness, eradicates dandruff, prevents greyness, and improves the hair in every way.
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Regulation Heavy Weight - -	9/-
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The Best Designs, Colours, and Value.

TAPESTRIES, BROCADES, DAMASKS, COTELINES, from **4/6** to **45/-** per yd.
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100 PIECES of CHINA

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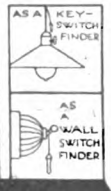

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AND
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Mason's
'O.K.' SAUCE
FRUITY, APPETISING,
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Make your Christmas Puddings & Mincemeat with

"Shredded"
ATORA
The Handy Suet

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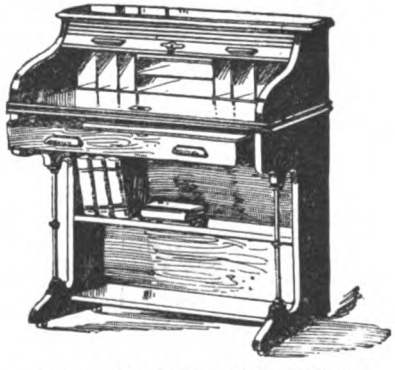

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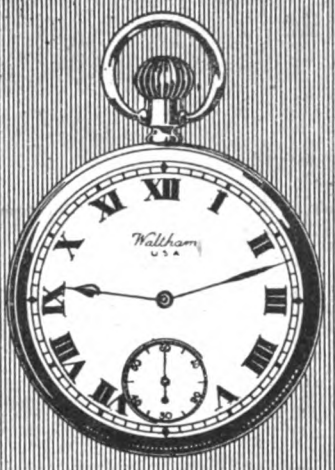

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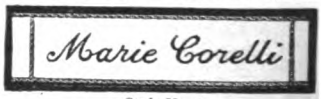

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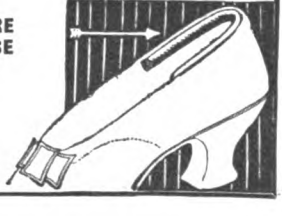

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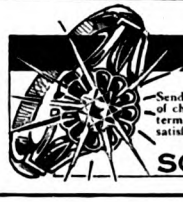

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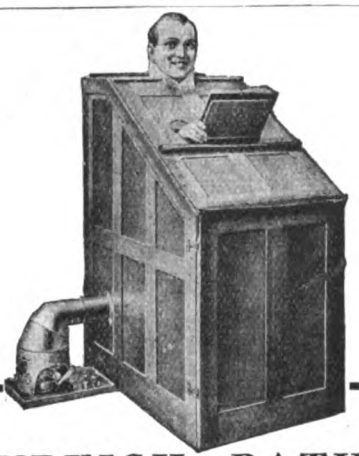

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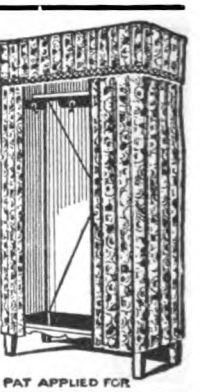

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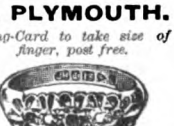

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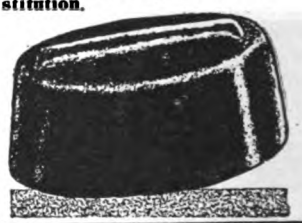

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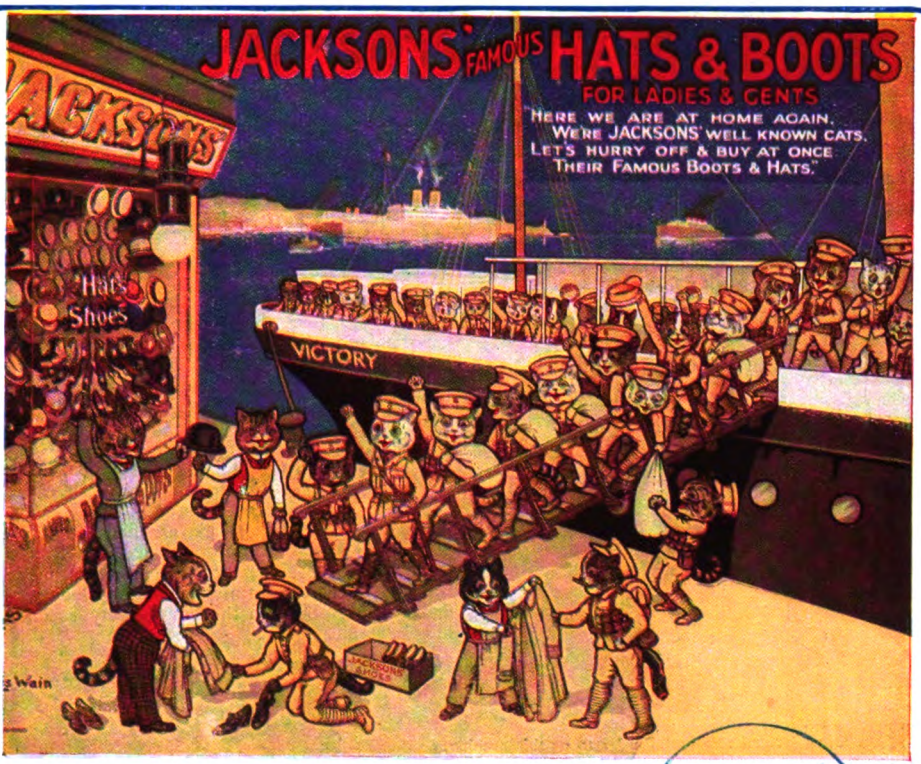

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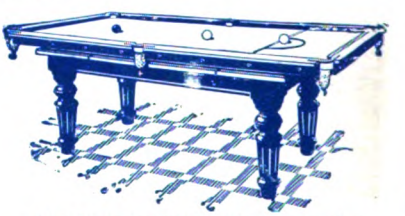

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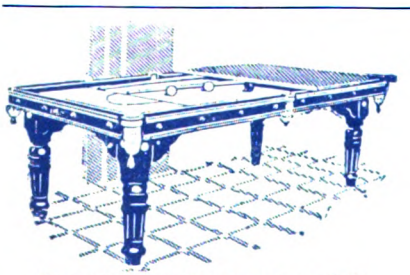

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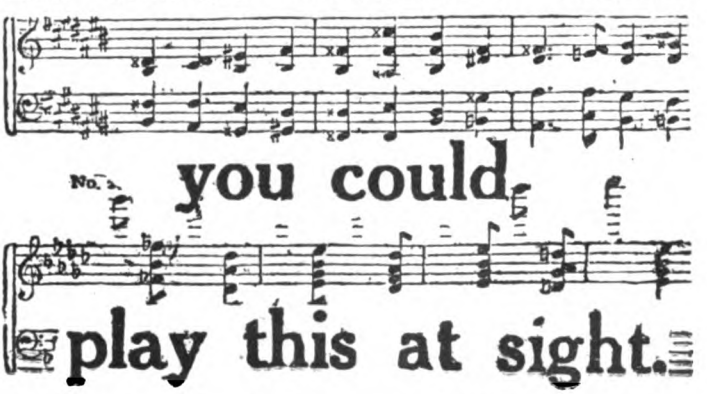

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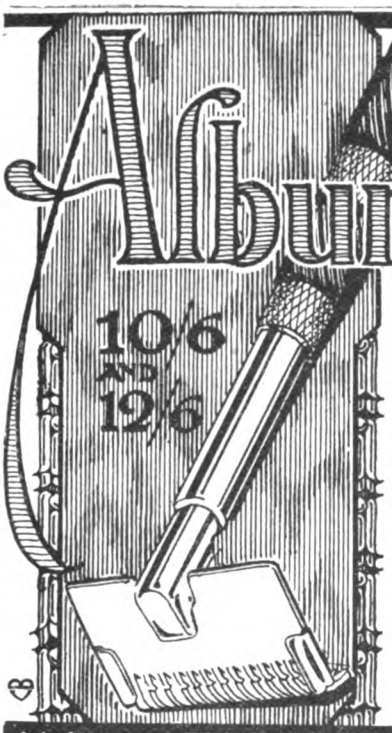

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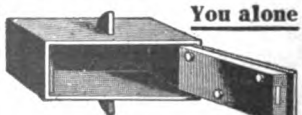

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You Can Control Your MEMORY by the ROTH METHOD

WHEN my old friend Faulkner invited me to a dinner-party at his house I little thought it would be the means of helping me indirectly to obtain a one-hundred-and-fifty per cent. increase in salary. Yet it was, and here is the way it all came about.

Towards the close of the evening, when things began to drag a bit, as they often do at parties, someone suggested the old idea of having everyone do a "stunt." Some sang, others forced weird sounds out of the piano, recited, told stories, and so on.

Then it came to Macdonald's turn. He was a quiet sort of chap, with an air about him that reminded one of the old saying that "still waters run deep." He said he had a simple "stunt" which he hoped we would like. He selected me to assist him. First, he asked to be blindfolded securely, to prove there was no trickery in it. Those present were to call out twenty-five numbers of three figures each, such as 161, 249, and so on. He asked me to write down the numbers as they were called.

This was done. Macdonald then astounded everyone by repeating the entire list of twenty-five numbers backwards and forwards. Then he asked people to request numbers by positions, such as the eighth number called, the fourth number, and so on. Instantly he repeated the exact number in the position called. He did this with the entire list—over and over again, without making a single mistake.

* * * * *

ON the way home that night I asked Macdonald how it was done. He said there was really nothing in it—simply a memory feat, the key to which could be learned in one evening. Then he told me the reason most people have bad memories is because they leave memory development to chance. Nearly anyone could develop a good memory, he said, by following a few simple rules. And then he told me how to do it. At the time I little thought that evening would prove to be one of the most eventful in my life, but such it proved to be.

What Macdonald told me I took to heart. I made remarkable strides towards improving my memory. At first I amused myself with my new-found ability by amazing people at parties. My "memory feat," as my friends called it, surely made a hit. I was showered with invitations for all sorts of affairs. If anyone were to ask me how to quickly develop social popularity I would tell them to learn my memory "feat"—but that is apart from what I want to tell you.

The most gratifying thing about the improvement of my memory was the way it helped me in business. Much to my surprise, I discovered that my memory training had made my brain clearer, quicker, keener. I felt that I was acquiring that mental grasp and alertness I had so often admired in other men.

My ability to remember things quickly attracted the attention of my employer, and promotion after promotion followed in rapid succession. I also found that my ability to remember helped me in dealing with other people; I could win them round to my way of thinking, simply because I could recall facts and figures the instant I required them.

We all hear a lot about the importance of sound judgment. I have found that sound judgment is largely the ability to weigh and judge facts in their relation to each other. Memory is the basis of sound judgment. I am only thirty-two, but many times I have been complimented on having the judgment of a man of forty-five. I take no personal credit for this—it is largely due to the way I trained my memory.

THESE are only a few of the ways I have profited by my trained memory. It has helped me to recall the names and faces of people I meet. I always liked to read, but usually forgot most of it. Now I find it easy to recall what I have read. Another thing is that I can now master a subject in considerably less time than before. Price lists, market quotations, data of all kinds I can recall much better than before I trained my memory.

My vocabulary, too, has increased. Whenever I see a striking word or expression I memorize it and use it in my dictation or conversation. This has put sparkle and pulling power into my conversation and business letters. I can now do my day's work quicker and with much less effort, because I do not have to keep stopping to look things up.

All this is extremely satisfying to me, of course. But the best part of it all is that *since I started to train my memory my salary has steadily increased.*

* * * * *

WHAT Macdonald told me that eventful evening was this: "Get the Roth Memory Course." I did. That is how I learned to do all the things I have told you about.

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The Roth Method has been taken up by over 150,000 men and women, and all these people are satisfied that this Course will do all that we claim. We have had thousands of letters congratulating us on the Roth Method, and you have an opportunity now of becoming a memory expert, as we are offering the Course for three days' free examination, so that you can satisfy yourself that what we claim in our advertising is absolutely true. You will have an opportunity of studying at least two of the lessons before the three days have expired, and, if you are then satisfied—and we know you will be—send us 3os. for the complete Course. If, however, you do not think the Course worth the money, send it back, and you will owe nothing. Surely you could not have a fairer offer.

Send a postcard now to the Standard Art Book Company, National Business and Personal Efficiency (Dept. R.71), Bramham Gardens, S.W.5, and join the 150,000 satisfied memory experts.

Your Position Commercially and Socially Depends on Your Being Able to Speak Convincingly

How I Learnt to Become a Convincing Talker in One Evening

By GEORGE RAYMOND

"Have you heard the news about Frank Jordan?"

This question quickly brought me to the little group which had gathered in the centre of the office. Jordan and I had started with the Great Eastern Machinery Company within a month of each other four years ago. A year ago Jordan was taken into the accountants' department, and I was sent out as traveller. Neither of us was blessed with an unusual degree of brilliancy, but we made good in our new positions well enough to keep them.

Imagine my amazement, then, when I heard:—

"Jordan's just been made secretary of the company!"

The first chance I got I walked into Jordan's new office, and after congratulating him warmly I asked him to give me the details of how he jumped ahead so quickly. His story is so intensely interesting that I am going to repeat it as closely as I remember.

"You remember how scared I used to be whenever I had to talk to the chief? You remember how you used to tell me that every time I opened my mouth I put my foot into it, meaning, of course, that every time I spoke I got into trouble?

"The first thing I did was to buy a number of books on public speaking, but they seemed to be meant for those who wanted to become orators, whereas what I wanted to learn was not only how to speak in public, but how to speak to individuals under various conditions in business and social life.

"A few weeks later, just as I was about to give up hope of ever learning to talk interestingly, I read an announcement stating that Dr. Frederick Law had just completed a new Course in business talking and public speaking entitled 'Mastery of Speech.' The Course was offered on approval without money in advance, so since I had nothing whatever to lose by examining the lessons, I sent for them, and in a few days they arrived. I glanced through the entire eight lessons, reading the headings and a few paragraphs here and there, and in about an hour the whole secret of effective speaking was opened to me.

"But perhaps the most wonderful part of the lessons were the actual examples of what things to say and when to say them to meet every condition. I found that there was a knack in making oral reports to my superiors. I found that there was a right way and a wrong way to present complaints, to give estimates, and to issue orders.

"I picked up some wonderful points about how to give my opinions, about how to answer complaints, about how to ask the bank for a loan, about how to ask for extensions. Another thing that struck me forcibly was that, instead of antagonizing people when I didn't agree with them, I learned how to bring them round to my way of thinking in the most pleasant sort of way. Then, of course, along with those lessons there were chapters on speaking before large audiences, how to find material for talking and speaking, how to talk to friends, how to talk to servants, and how to talk to children."

So confident are the Standard Art Book Company, Limited, publishers of "Mastery of Speech," Dr. Law's Course in Business Talking and Public Speaking, of the result once you have an opportunity to see in your own home how you can, in one hour, learn the secret of speaking, that they are willing to send you the Course for **free examination.**

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On the other hand, if you are as pleased as are the thousands of other men and women who have taken the Course, send only 30s. **in full payment** to the Standard Art Book Company, Limited, National Business and Personal Efficiency (Dept. L.53), 2, Bramham Gardens, S.W.5.

Cultivate Your Voice!

Would You Have Your Voice Beautiful?

IN these enlightened days it is a most astonishing fact that very few people (comparatively speaking) fully realise the beauty of the human voice; and those who do understand its possibilities often utterly fail to grasp the still more important fact that the voice can be not only trained and improved, but PRODUCED.

Consider, for instance, the speaking voice (as apart from singing)—how often a really charming personality is utterly spoilt by a rough or harsh intonation, which, to the sensitive ear, jars to such an extent as to quite nullify the undoubted attraction and fascination of the individual in question.

Again, there are many people in this work-a-day world who possess intensely sensitive ears, and to whom beautiful sounds in any form are an intense delight, but who seldom attempt to sing, much as they desire to do so, because their voices are unmusical or unmanageable. To these I would say: "Because you do not know how to manage or use your vocal cords in such a way as to produce musical sounds, don't think that singing is an impossibility to you."

Everyone, with the exception of those who are abnormally deformed, can sing, and sing well, if properly trained: and everyone can acquire a good speaking voice. There are many lecturers, preachers, actors, etc., who have the ability necessary for their respective callings barring one essential—viz.: a strong, pleasing voice, and clear enunciation.

There are also thousands of people—incipient consumptives, and those who suffer with weak chests and throats—to whom singing is vitally important. Science has proved that this art—involving, as it does, the necessity of correct breathing—is invaluable for complaints of this nature, leaving out of the question altogether the great benefit to the health in general to be derived from correct training and exercises.

A well-known Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine, and of the Royal Institute of Public Health, has devoted seventeen years of close study and research to the subject of singing in every one of its aspects—from the standpoint of health (how to avoid disease), for athletics, for speaking and singing, etc., and has finally decided to offer the results of his work to the public in a remarkable series of lessons, consisting of eight books, published by the Standard Art Book Co., Ltd., which deal exhaustively with this interesting subject.

The Course can be studied in your own home and in your spare time, and the various lessons and exercises contained in the Course are dealt with in such a comprehensive and concise manner that the object aimed at—viz.: a good singing or speaking voice, coupled with improved or augmented health—is yours in a surprisingly short time.

Correct methods are insisted on, and, if carried out, will do all that the author of this excellent Course claims for them. The undoubted standing in the medical world which the author possesses is sufficient guarantee of the thorough soundness of his teaching.

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The Strand Magazine.

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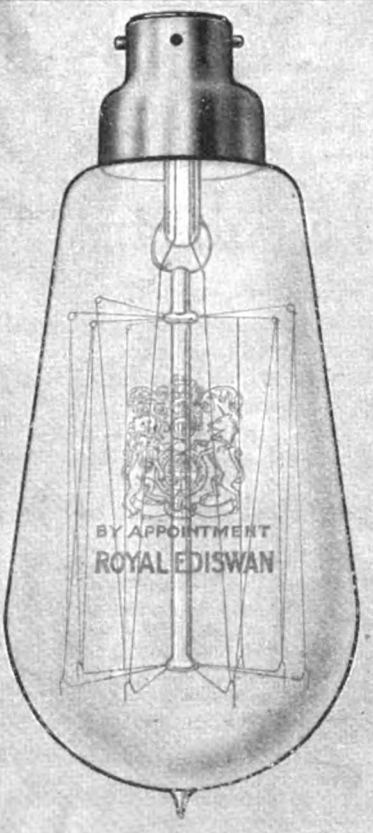
It is prepared also in a **Golden Colour** for **Fair Hair.**

Great care should be taken to avoid spurious imitations of **ROWLAND'S MACASSAR OIL,** offered to the public on the lure of being cheap. At no time could these cheap imitations be composed of the Refined, Costly, and Stimulating Ingredients which **ROWLAND'S MACASSAR OIL** contains; but now that all these materials cost three times as much as they did before the War, it is more impossible than ever to imitate it cheaply and successfully. **ROWLAND'S MACASSAR OIL** is just as good as it ever was, and is still sold in **3/6, 7/-, 10/6,** and **21/-** sizes by Stores, Chemists, Hairdressers, and Rowlands, 67, Hatton Garden, London.



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EDISWAN

THE LIGHT OF
OTHER DAYS
WAS POOR INDEED
IN COMPARISON WITH
THE BRILLIANCE OF
MODERN LAMPS
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ROYAL EDISWAN
DRAWN WIRE & ½ WATT TYPE LAMPS
ENGLISH EDISWAN. EVERYTHING ELECTRICAL
B&C.

MIMOSA discourses on NATURAL BEAUTY and how to obtain it.

To-day every woman of taste and refinement avoids the use of cosmetics or made-up toilet preparations which give an artificial appearance. The fresh, natural complexion that few women have, and every woman desires, is best obtained by use of original ingredients already at hand or which can be obtained from any reliable chemist. My advice is to avoid the use of most made-up face creams, rouge and beautifying preparations. They are usually obvious and often disappointing. If you will get only the proper original ingredients, you will be satisfied with the result. Insist on having what you ask for. If the chemist does not happen to have it in stock, he can immediately get it for you.

Good Shampoo Important.—The hair should be allowed to breathe, and the greasy film around each strand must be removed with a mild non-alkaline shampoo. Soaps should be tabooed. The very best solution for the purpose can be made by dissolving a teaspoonful of stallax granules in a cup of hot water. It stimulates the scalp to healthy action, and at the same time leaves the hair in that soft, fluffy condition so much admired. Any chemist can supply you with an original packet of stallax, sufficient to make twenty-five or thirty shampoos.

Magic for Superfluous Hair.—It is astounding the number of women who suffer from unsightly growths of hair on the face, and it will come as a piece of good news to know that there is a simple substance known as powdered pheminol which will remove it immediately and permanently. Mix a small quantity into a thin paste with a little water, and apply to the objectionable growths. In two minutes all trace of the hair will have entirely vanished, and your skin will be as soft and smooth as a child's.

To have Smooth, White Skin all through the Winter.—Does your skin chap or roughen easily, or become unduly red or blotchy? Let me tell you a quick and easy way to overcome the trouble and keep your complexion beautifully white, smooth, and soft. Just get some ordinary mercolized wax at the chemist's, and use a little before retiring as you would use cold cream. The wax, through some peculiar action, flecks off the rough discoloured or blemished skin. The worn-out cuticle comes off just like dandruff on a diseased scalp only in almost invisible particles. Mercolized wax simply hastens Nature's work, which is the rational and proper way to attain a perfect complexion, so much sought after, but very seldom seen. The process is perfectly simple and quite harmless.

For Dry, Irritating and Dandruffy Scalps.—Nothing can compare with the following [illegible] for the above condition, and until you have rectified any trouble in this direction, it is useless to expect the hair to grow healthy and vigorous. Mix a packet of boranium with ½ pint of bay rum, shake the bottle well, and allow to stand for 30 minutes, then add ½ pint cold water and strain. This simple home remedy will stimulate the hair roots to their normal functions, resulting in a beautiful growth of new hair.

Rouge Not Necessary.—If you must add a little colour to the cheeks, please do not use rouge; it is always so painfully obvious that women of refinement have now discarded it for ever. There is a little-known substance called colliandum, obtainable at most chemists', which can be used in its place. It gives a perfectly natural tint and defies the closest scrutiny, besides having the undoubted advantage of not rubbing off.

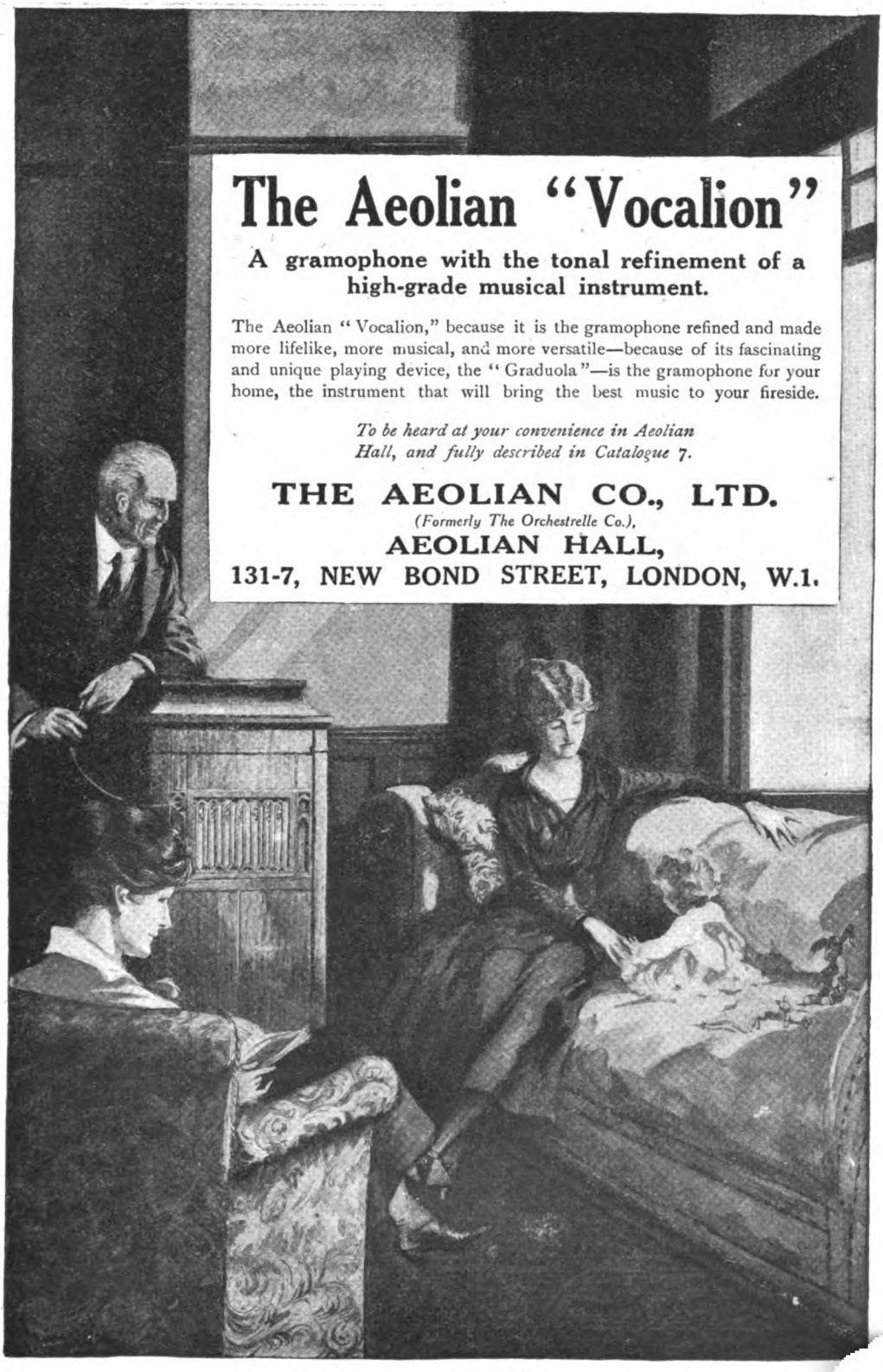
The Powder Puff Passes.—A persistently shiny nose, or a dull, lifeless complexion, drives many a woman to cosmetics and consequent despair. And all the time a simple remedy lies at hand in the home. Get from your chemist about an ounce of cleminite, and add sufficient water to dissolve it. A little of this simple lotion is Nature's own beautifier. It is very good for the skin and instantly gives the complexion a soft, velvety, youthful bloom that any woman might envy. It lasts all day or evening, renders powdering entirely unnecessary, and absolutely defies detection.

Miscellaneous Hints.—For lips inclined to be rough or harsh use a soft stick of prolactum.

An ideal complexion soap is one called pilenta. It contains no free alkali and is as near neutrality as science can make it.

To make the eyelashes grow long, dark, and curling, massage them gently with mennaline. It is quite a harmless substance and will not injure the eyes.

PARKER BELMONT'S CLYNOL BERRIES FOR OBESITY.—[ADVT.]



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A gramophone with the tonal refinement of a high-grade musical instrument.

The Aeolian "Vocalion," because it is the gramophone refined and made more lifelike, more musical, and more versatile—because of its fascinating and unique playing device, the "Graduola"—is the gramophone for your home, the instrument that will bring the best music to your fireside.

To be heard at your convenience in Aeolian Hall, and fully described in Catalogue 7.

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THE "SWAN" FOUNTPEN

is all that a gift should be.

WHEN you give a "SWAN" Fountpen it is the same as giving a personal servant for life. Twenty years' constant use is a common record. Moreover, a "SWAN" is such a practical thing to give from other standpoints. Its usefulness cannot be questioned—it can be as pretty as your choice and purse will admit, and it's so suitable to everyone. It is easy to send—the nib may be exchanged if not suited to the recipient's hand, and a printed guarantee of service goes with every pen.

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a "Swan" for everyone this Xmas!

Are you a Blond?

THE SECRET OF MAKING PEOPLE LIKE YOU

THE greatest asset any man can possibly have is the faculty for making people like him. It is even more important than ability. The secret of making people like you lies in your ability to understand the emotional and mental characteristics of the people you meet.

Did you know that a blond has an entirely different temperament from a brunet ?—that to get along with a blond type you must act entirely differently from the way in which you would act to get along with a brunet ?

When you really know the difference between blonds and brunets, the difference in their characters, temperaments, abilities, and peculiar traits, you will save yourself many a mistake—and you will incidentally learn much you never knew before about yourself.

You can have the power of making people like you. You can, at a glance, tell the characteristics of any man, woman, or child—tell instantly their likes and dislikes. Here is how it is done :—

Everyone you know can be placed in one or two general types—blond or brunet. There is as big a difference between the mental and emotional characteristics of a blond and those of a brunet as there is between night and day. You persuade a blond in one way—a brunet in another. Blonds enjoy one phase of life—brunets another. Blonds make good in one kind of a job—brunets in one entirely different.

To know these differences scientifically is the first step in judging men and women ; in getting on well with them ; in mastering their minds ; in making them like you ; in winning their respect, admiration, love, and friendship.

And when you have learned these differences—when you can tell at a glance just what to do and say to make any man or woman like you—your success in life is assured.

For example, there's the case of a large manufacturing concern. Trouble sprang up at one of the factories. The men talked strike. Things looked ugly. Harry Winslow was sent to straighten it out. On the eve of a general walk-out he pacified the men and headed off the strike. And not only this, but ever since then that factory has led all the others for production. He was able to do this because he knew how to make these people like him and do what he wanted them to do.

Another case, entirely different, is that of Henry Peters. Because of his ability to make people like him —his faculty for " getting under the skin " and making people think his way—he was given the position of Assistant to the Director of a large firm. Two other men, both well liked by their fellow-employees, had each expected to get the job. So when the outside man, Peters, came in, he was looked upon by everyone as an interloper, and was openly disliked by every other person in the office.

Peters was handicapped in every way. But in spite of that, in three weeks he had made fast friends of everyone in the house, and had even won over the two men who had been most bitter against him. The whole secret is that he could tell in an instant how to appeal to any man and make himself well liked.

You realize, of course, that just knowing the difference between a blond and a brunet could not accomplish all these wonderful things There are other things to be taken into account. But here is the whole secret.

You know that everyone does not think alike. What one likes another dislikes. And what offends one pleases another. Well, there is your cue. You can make an instant " hit " with anyone, if you say the things they want you to say and act the way they want you to act. Do this, and they will surely like you and believe in you, and will go miles out of their way to please you.

You can do this easily by knowing certain simple signs. In addition to the difference in complexion, every man, woman, and child has written on them signs as distinct as though they were in letters a foot high, which shows you from one quick glance exactly what to say and to do to please them—to get them to believe—to think as you think—to do exactly what you want them to do.

In knowing these simple signs is the whole secret of getting what you want out of life—of making friends, of business and social advantage. Every great leader uses this method. That is why he is a leader. Use it yourself and you will quickly become a leader—nothing can stop you.

Dr. Blackford has explained the method in a simple seven-lesson Course, entitled " Judging Character at Sight." Even a half-hour's reading of this wonderful Course will give you an insight into human nature and a power over people which will surprise you.

SEND NO MONEY.

Such confidence have the publishers in Dr. Blackford's Course that they will gladly send it to you for 3 days' FREE EXAMINATION. Look it over thoroughly ; see if it lives up to all the claims made for it. If you do not want to keep it, then return it, and the transaction is closed. And if you decide to keep it—and you certainly will—then merely remit 30s. **in full payment.**

Remember, you take no risk, you assume no obligation. The entire Course goes to you on approval. You have everything to gain—nothing to lose. So send a postcard now to The Standard Art Book Company, National Business and Personal Efficiency (Dept. B.54), 2, Bramham Gardens, S.W.5, and learn how to make people like you.

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Containing one largest-size bottle of
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MOTHERS will find this unequalled for keeping the children's hair in a clean and healthy condition.

RANKIN'S HEAD Ointment
instantly kills all nits and vermin in the hair and is pleasant in use.
In **6d.** *and* **1/-** *sizes of all chemists.*
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No more Ugly Ears

Get the Claxton Ear-Cap and let your child wear it in the nursery and during sleep, and any tendency to outstanding ears will quickly be corrected. Easy and comfortable in wear. The

CLAXTON EAR-CAP

gently moulds the cartilages while they are pliable. Made in rose pink in 21 sizes. Send your order direct, giving measurements round head just above ears, and over head from lobe to lobe of ears, to S. M. Claxton, Castle Laboratory, London, N.W.1, and enclose remittance of 4/-. Also obtainable from chemists, stores, Harrod's, Selfridge's, D. H. Evans & Co., John Barker & Co., Ltd., Garrould's, Woolland Bros., and other ladies' outfitters.

HOME-MADE TOILET PREPARATIONS.

By ROSE STUART.

Any lady or gentleman can make at home many necessary toilet preparations that will give really wonderful results. The ingredients can be bought at any chemist's at little cost and mixed at home.

FOR THE HAIR.

Here is a simple recipe which any lady or gentleman can mix at home that will immediately remove dandruff, stimulate the growth of the hair and prevent it from falling out. Merely dissolve 1 drachm of powdered sanolite in 3 ounces of bay rum and add 3 ounces of water. Apply to the scalp once a day, and rub it in well where there is dandruff. Not only is this mixture a powerful stimulant to the scalp, but it is an active germicidal agent, and scurf immediately disappears where it is applied. The hair can be prevented from falling out and made to grow long, thick, and beautiful by the aid of this simple mixture.

ROSE STUART.
Beauty Specialist.

FOR GREY HAIR.

Any lady or gentleman can restore their grey, streaked or faded hair to its natural colour with this simple home-made mixture. To a half-pint of water add one ounce of bay rum, ¼ ounce of Orlex Compound, and ¼ ounce of glycerine. These ingredients can be purchased at any chemist's at little cost. Apply to the hair every other day until the hair becomes its original colour. This is not a dye, does not colour the scalp, is not sticky or greasy, and does not rub off.

FOR THE COMPLEXION.

You can make at home a greaseless vanishing cream that will beautify the complexion, make the skin soft, smooth and pliable, and prevent the hands from chapping. Dissolve ¼ ounce of powdered grexite in 1 ounce of glycerine, and add a pint of water. These ingredients cost little at any chemist's. It makes more than a pint of greaseless vanishing cream or lotion that will give the complexion the clear, velvety appearance of youth, and remove wrinkles, roughness, and chaps. Men will find it excellent after shaving.

YOUR Happy Glaxo Baby will make YOU a Happy Mother!

"DEAR SIRS,—Some months ago I promised you a photograph of my little girl, and I am now sending you one. It was taken a month ago, the day she was one year ten months. You will agree she is a credit to Glaxo. I have written you before in praise of your wonderful food. Baby has never been a moment's trouble, and is alway happy. Yours truly, Mrs. C———."

Glaxo is sold by Chemists and Stores throughout the British Isles, New Zealand and Australia. Agencies in Belgium, Burma, Canada, Ceylon, Egypt, France, India, Malta, Palestine, Portugal, South Africa, South America, Spain, Straits Settlements, Syria, and West Indies.

GLAXO (Dept. 156), 155, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

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The Toilet Cream de Luxe.

POMEROY DAY CREAM is, of all "vanishing" creams, the most delightful. It has a lovely effect on the skin, and is so fragrant and refreshing that one wants to be using it always. Being non-greasy and vanishing, it can be used any time, any day. The more one uses it, the better for the skin, which is rendered soft, smooth, and fresh, and is protected against wind and weather.

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In dainty half-crown vases, at high-class Chemists, Perfumers, etc.

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JEWELLERY REVIVER TABLET.

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PLATE POWDER *(Registered).*

Price **6d., 1/-,** and **2/6** per box.

Beacon Oilskins

Inside a Beacon Sporting Oilskin the weather is always dry. No rain that ever fell could get inside. Snow, Sleet, Hail, Wind, and blinding Spindrift have to stay outside too, for Beacons were designed to give bone-dry comfort to outdoor men in *every* kind of weather. *They do this well.* or money back. Haydon Coats in Black, **42/-**; Khaki and Colours, **47/6**; Sou'westers to match, **5/6** & **6/6** respectively. Post Free U.K.; extra abroad. *The illustration shows the Haydon Oilskin. 50,000 men wear it. It has a smooth, dry finish, wide skirt, easy Raglan shoulders, smart, roomy, Sporting cut, and is guaranteed not to stick or leak.* **Illust'd List Free.** Send a postcard for "Weather Comfort," describing Oilskins for all, to Barbour's Ltd., 19, Beacon Bldgs., S. Shields

Rheumatism and Gout

MR. HORATIO BOTTOMLEY PAYS HIS "RESPECTS" TO THE GERMAN SPAS.

Some candid advice to sufferers from any Uric Acid complaints, Stomach, Liver and Kidney disorders, etc. Says saltrated water to his mind (and body) beats Carlsbad into a cocked hat.

There is no mystery about the medicinal ingredients which give such wonderful curative powers to the waters of various natural medicated springs. Their exact nature and quantities were ascertained by chemical analysis long ago, and these "saltrates" or constituent mineral elements, artificially but accurately reproduced, can be obtained as a standard refined compound from any chemist. It is only necessary to dissolve the powder in water, and you have a curative drink which is more convenient, much less expensive, always fresh, and far more pure and palatable than water at the natural spas. (Certain bad-tasting iodides and other undesirable impurities are eliminated in the refining.)

Some time ago Mr. Bottomley, a frequent visitor to the German spas in pre-war days, was persuaded to try a course of saltrated water as an efficient substitute. The extremely gratifying results are best explained by the following characteristic letter which the famous editor wrote to a London firm of manufacturing chemists and saltrates refiners :—

> "Now that all German spas are taboo, may I congratulate you on your Alkia Saltrates and Reudel Bath Saltrates, which to my mind (and body) beat Carlsbad into a cocked hat. In future, with your help, I shall certainly support home industries by taking my cure on the spot"

Horatio Bottomley

NOTE.—**Alkia Saltrates is a highly refined compound which** produces medicinal drinking water. Probably unequalled in its power to cure serious liver, kidney or intestinal disorders, and considered by many eminent authorities to be the best anti-rheumatic agent or blood purifier and eliminant of uric acid known to medical science at the present time. It is also widely prescribed by physicians for stomach disorders, such as hyperacidity, etc. It never irritates the kidneys or causes depressing after-effects as many salines, morning powders, and patent medicines do. The average dose is a level teaspoonful, or less, in a tumbler of water.

REUDEL BATH SALTRATES. — This compound exactly reproduces the ingredients of world-famous natural curative bathing spring waters, and, of course, is for external use only. The strongly medicated and oxygenated water stops even the worst rheumatic or gouty aches, pains, and stiffness within ten minutes. Its strongly antiseptic and healing qualities also render the curative water highly efficacious for any bad skin affections, such as eczema, etc. As a foot bath, a fairly strong solution quickly softens corns so the whole growth comes right out entire, leaving no core or root to grow again. The quantities usually prescribed are a small handfull for a full bath or a tablespoonful for a strong foot-bath. Any good chemist would have these two standard and inexpensive saltrates compounds in stock.

The petty annoyance of the oft-broken boot-lace can be side-tracked entirely if you insist on British HURCULACES, renowned for their good qualities in wear and appearance. For boots or shoes in black or tan shades. Insist on having them—they are sure to please you.

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it's the most reliable and efficient in putting out fire.

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The Corona is not one fraction less efficient in any respect than the big Standard machines.

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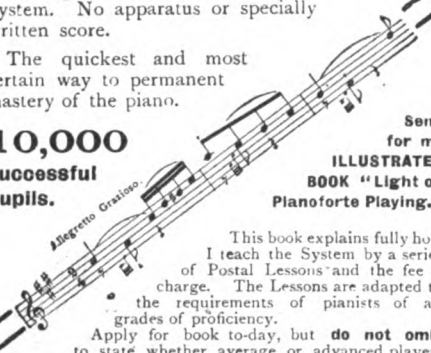

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A wonderful beauty bringer

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Use it daily and look your best

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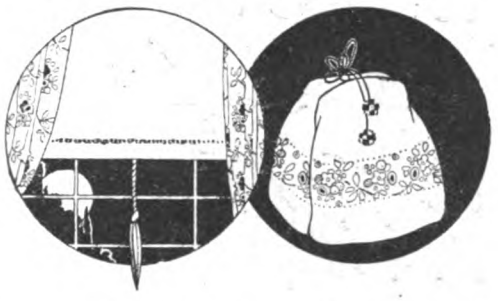

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For a copper or two (pay no more than the price printed on the packet) he gives new delicate artistic shades to all your faded hangings. Think of the pounds you can save by home dyeing, and all for a few coppers too!

Drummer Dyes are *all-British* and can be obtained in any shade, and you can mix hundreds of pleasing art shades yourself at will.

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Tapestries **Duchess Sets** **Cushion Covers**
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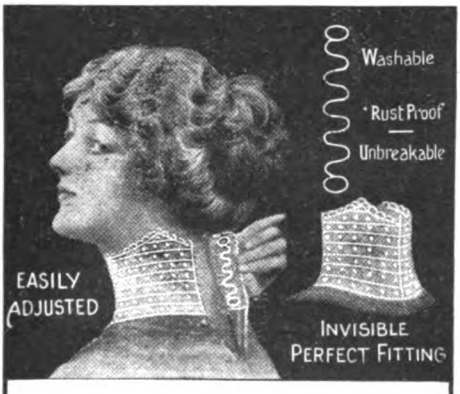
Drummer Dyes are sold by Chemists and Stores everywhere.
Write for Booklet, "The Art of Home Dyeing."

W. EDGE & SONS, Ltd., Bolton, Lancs.
And at 25, Front Street, Toronto, and 15, Valentine Street, New Bedford, Mass., U.S.A.



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They give with every movement of the head, and do not chafe the neck.

Made in Black or White in the following sizes :— 2, 2¼, 2½, 2¾, 3, 3¼, 3½, and 4 inch.

1/- per packet of 12. 3½d. per Card of 3.

Stocked and Sold by all Leading Drapers.

5 HOURS GAS for 3d.

BURNS ORDINARY PARAFFIN LAMP OIL WITHOUT WICK.

Generates its own gas. Greater heat than coal or gas at half the cost. One filling lasts 5 hours.

25/-

Regulated like a Gas Range

Best British Make.

Special construction. Impossible to over-fill.

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No smell, smoke or dirt.

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In addition to the Kitchen the "Corona" is useful in other spheres:—for instance, whilst the dining-room fire is drawing up a "Corona"

WILL MAKE THE ROOM COMFORTABLY WARM in TEN Minutes.

Bedrooms and night nurseries can be heated in the same manner just before retiring.—Quite a boon in these days of coal and labour shortage.

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Gold and Palladium Point. Gold Spring Needle. Can be carried in any position.

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WILSON'S COMMON-SENSE EAR-DRUMS

A new scientific invention, entirely different in construction from all other devices. Assist the deaf when all other devices fail, and where medical skill has given no relief. They are soft, comfortable, and invisible; have no wire or string attachment.

WRITE FOR PAMPHLET. Mention this Magazine.

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For cleaning Silver, Electro Plate &c.

Goddard's Plate Powder

Sold everywhere 6d 1/ 2/6 & 4/6

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Now that Laitova Lemon Cheese is a staple article of food in hundreds of thousands of British homes, we would reduce the price if we could. But we cannot without reducing the quality, *and this we will not do.*

But by packing in hygienic jars instead of glass we can save 3d. per jar. So we have adopted these jars as our standard package.

The hygienic jar is convenient; is made and filled by machinery (untouched by hand), and

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SHORTENS CONVALESCENCE.

PERMANENTLY STRENGTHENS THE ENTIRE SYSTEM
RECOMMENDED BY THE MEDICAL PROFESSION FOR NEURALGIA, INSOMNIA, FATIGUE, BRAIN FAG, ANÆMIA, NERVOUS INDIGESTION, LACK OF CONCENTRATION.

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Of Stores and Chemists, or from the Wholesale Agents,
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And from **HARRODS, CIVIL SERVICE** and **LEADING LONDON STORES.**

MAKES STRAIGHT LANK HAIR WAVY & LUSTROUS

Quin Quenna used as a shampoo makes your hair astonishingly thick, lustrous, wavy. Cleanses the hair thoroughly and keeps the scalp free from scurf, etc Positively stops hair falling out. Feeds and strengthens the roots, thus inducing a thick luxuriant growth. Beautifies and restores to grey, dull, or faded hair all the radiance of youthful charm.

You never catch cold or suffer from headaches if you use Quin Quenna.

Quin Quenna in packets (containing sufficient for 2 shampoos), 2 for 1/-, 6 packets 2/9. All Chemists, or post free direct from LEIGHTON LABS., Room 24, 35, Gray's Inn Road, London.

Quin Quenna BETTER THAN A SHAMPOO

Quinolox brushed into hair every morning makes it pretty, wavy, bright and abundant all day long. 2/- a bot.

YOUR FRIEND IN A 100 TROUBLES.

"Vaseline" Trade Mark

PETROLEUM JELLY.

THE EVERY-DAY NEED.

For internal and external uses; in the Nursery it is invaluable, and a necessary toilet adjunct on every dressing table.

THERE IS A VARIETY OF PREPARATIONS—some for the Complexion, Chapped Hands, etc.; for Rheumatism, Neuralgia, Healing Cuts, Wounds; for giving a Healthy and Glossy appearance to the Hair, etc.; in fact, no Home Medicine Cupboard should be without an assortment of these specialities.

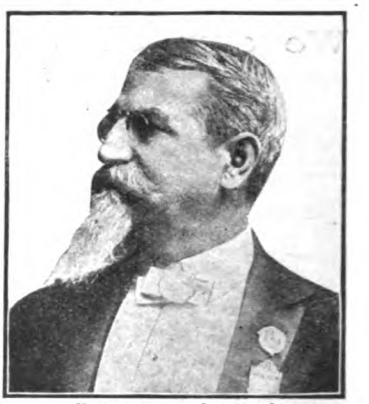
The Trade Mark Brand "VASELINE" is the Sole Property of this Company, and is on every Tin and Bottle.

CHESEBROUGH MANUFACTURING CO. (Consolidated), 42, HOLBORN VIADUCT, LONDON, E.C.1.

I WAS BALD

I was born in 1852, and, just as my photograph shows, I now have a full growth of hair. Yet, thirty years ago, I found scurf upon my scalp, and my hair began to fall away, until after a while I was classed as a "bald head."

Call it vanity if you will, it was displeasing to me to remain bald. Furthermore, I believe it is our birthright to have plenty of hair upon our heads.



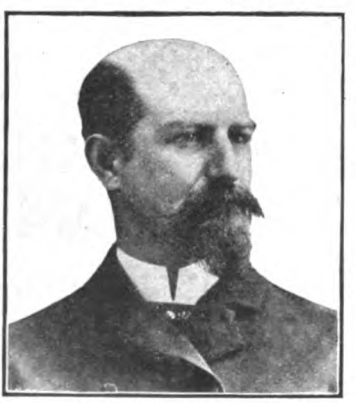
(From a recent photograph)

Seeking a Hair Growth

It is scarcely necessary for me to state that in the hope of growing new hair I had experimented with one thing and another—the usual array of lotions, pomades, shampoos, etc.—without getting any benefit. At that age I looked older than I do now. Later, when I became a trader in the Indian Territory of U.S.A., some of the Cherokees jocosely called me "the white brother without a scalp lock."

American Indians Never Bald

I never saw a bald Cherokee Indian. Both braves and squaws almost invariably use tobacco, eat irregularly, frequently wear tight bands round their heads, and do other things which are commonly ascribed as causes of baldness. Yet they all possess beautiful hair. What, then, is their secret? Being on the spot—most of the time at Tahlequah—and upon very friendly terms, it was easy for me to gain information from the usually taciturn Cherokees. I learned exactly how American Indians grow long, luxuriant hair, avoiding baldness and eliminating scurf or dandruff.



(From a photo when bald)

My Hair Grew Again

Then I applied these secrets to myself, and my hair began to grow. There was no messing or trouble about it. The new hairs emanated from my scalp as profusely as grass grows on a properly-kept lawn. I have had a plenitude of hair ever since.

Numerous friends of mine in Philadelphia and elsewhere asked me what had performed such a miracle, and I gave them the Indian elixir. Their hair soon grew over bald spots. Scurf disappeared wherever it existed—and it never returned. That these persons were amazed and delighted is stating the fact mildly. The hair that grows is strong and silk-like. It has beautiful lustre, and imparts the appearance of health and vigour.

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To any person who writes a request for it and encloses sixpence in stamps (or a P.O.) a testing box of Kotalko will be sent post paid. Mention Mrs., Mr., Miss, Rev., etc., and sign name plainly. Kindly address your letter as below. After using the testing package, when you observe that your hair is beginning to grow—even if you have been bald for years—you may obtain a further supply from the proprietor.

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EASILY — QUICKLY — CHEAPLY.

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Are you in pain? This is the question you will hear daily, and to be able to relieve pain, whether it be a slight nervous headache or the most excruciating sufferings of neuralgia or rheumatism, brings the height of pleasure to both patient and doctor.

Touching this point, Dr. H. Engle (M.D.) says Antikamnia Tablets have become favourites with members of the medical profession, they are very reliable in all kinds of pain, and act at once.

A BOON TO LADIES.

Antikamnia Tablets never fail to give relief in all pains due to rheumatism, headache, sciatica, neuralgia, toothache, gout, and are especially useful for all conditions known as women's aches and pains.

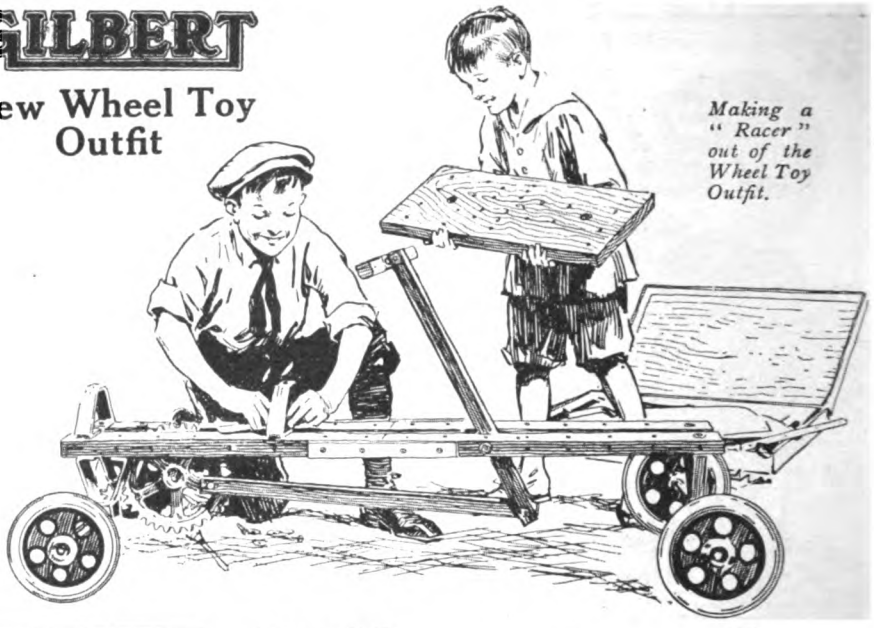
Antikamnia Tablets are quite safe, and leave no unpleasant after effects, and in 92 per cent. of all cases they stop the pain immediately.

TRIAL PACKAGES FREE.

10,000 packages of Antikamnia Tablets have been set aside for free distribution. If you will send your name and address (a postcard will do) to the Antikamnia Tablet Dept. (A84), 46, Holborn Viaduct, London, E.C., you will receive one of these presentation packages, with interesting booklet, absolutely free of charge.

GILBERT

New Wheel Toy Outfit



Making a "Racer" out of the Wheel Toy Outfit.

Build your own Scooter

Here's the best thing I've invented for years—a new Gilbert toy. With these sets of specially made steel disc wheels, finely painted steel plates and axles, strong hardwood bars, etc., you can make all sorts of great outdoor life size toys. A screwdriver and a wrench are the only tools you need. Simple directions in the outfits tell you how to put everything together.

Make Racers, Scooters, Wagons, Trucks

The Wheel Toy Outfit as it comes to you, and two of the toys you can make with it.

You can make a new toy whenever you want it—coasters and racers and scooters that are strong and speedy, snappy-looking express carts, baggage trucks, wheelbarrows, go-carts, etc.
The splendid £3 7 6 set has gears and pinions and extra parts that make a great power racer. The £1 19 6 set makes the glider, coaster, flat topped wagon, etc. Then there is a big £5 5 0 set that also makes a small sleigh and racer with runners. You can have fun all the year round with these sets.

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Here's your chance to win a big prize. I have started a big toy-building contest for boys and girls, with a real buckboard automobile or Shetland pony for first prize, and a hundred other fine prizes. The contest is FREE. Just write your name and address plainly on the coupon below and mail it to me and I'll send you the facts about the contest, a list of the prizes and a copy of my boys' magazine full of stories and things for boys to do. I'll also send the illustrated catalogue of Gilbert Toys. Write now.

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Obtainable at all large stores and toy shops.

MAIL THIS COUPON.

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Send me, free of charge, facts about the Prize Contest and copy of your boys' magazine and catalogue.

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Carriage paid in U.K. Foreign postage extra. Can be had in all sizes. Send size or outline of foot and Postal Order.

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The Ideal Cleanser and disinfectant.

S is for "Sophos" of cleansers the King,

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P is the price, which is really not high,

H is your home, where its virtues you'll try,

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Bottle **1/1** *returnable.*

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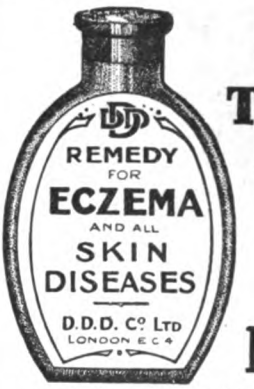

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Prices: Nickel, 1/6; Silver-plated, 2/-; Sterling Silver, 5/-; Hygienic Paper Tubes, 3/- 1,000, 1/9 500, Post Free. *Also TRADE supplied.*

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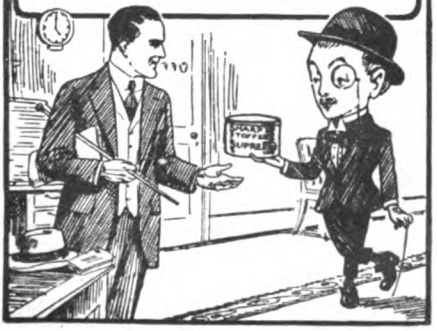

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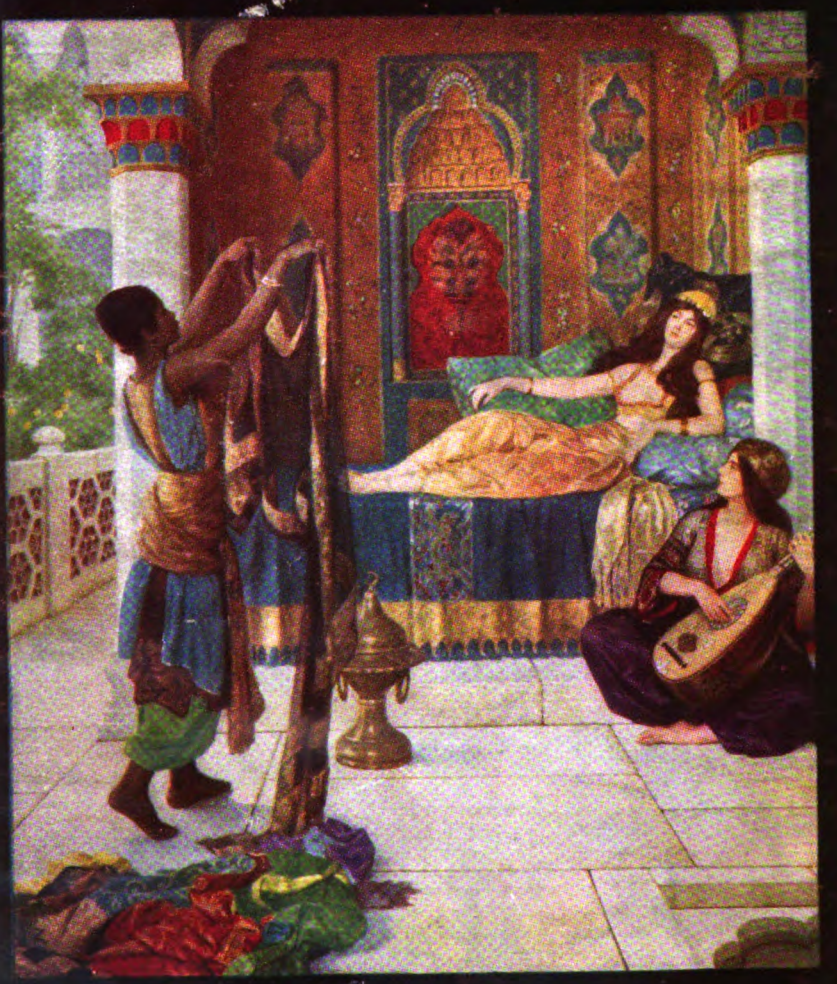

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